

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

NURSERY IN TURMOIL

Dispute over childcare sackings

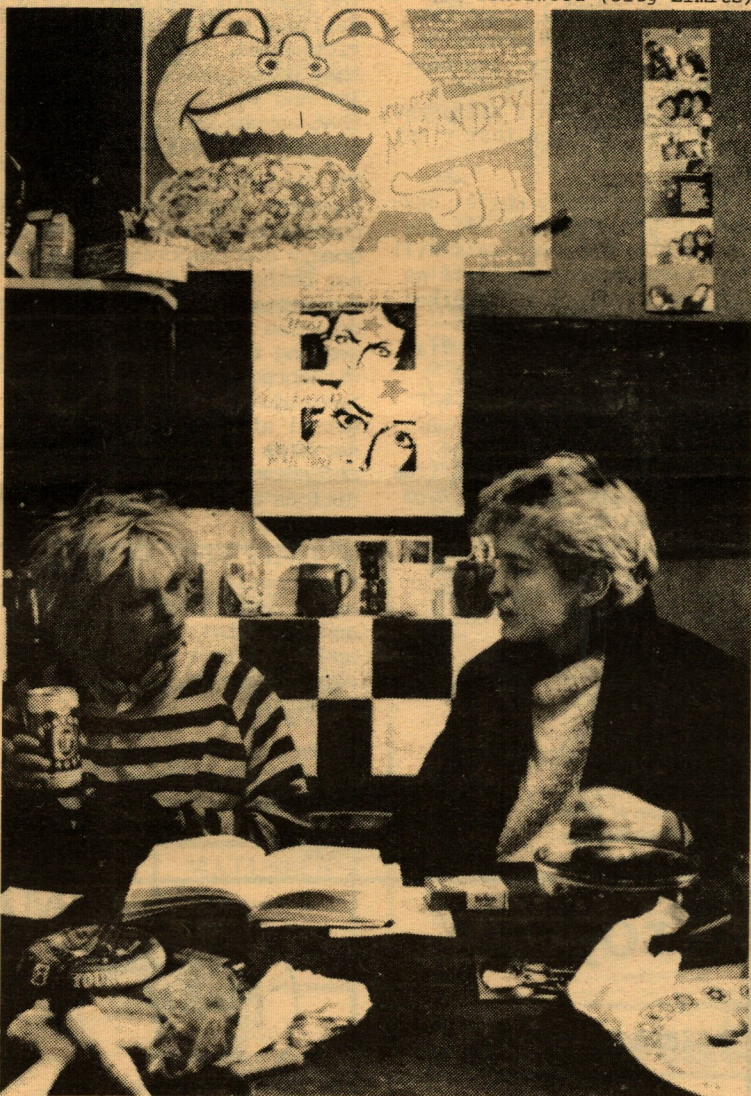
The dismissal of two of the workers at Market Nursery has generated a storm of controversy which has hit both the national press and left-wing periodicals. The sackings followed a disciplinary hearing conducted by the nursery's Management Committee. There have since been calls for an enquiry by Hackney Council's Social Services Department.

Parent Involvement

Market Nursery is a community nursery, funded by Hackney Council and managed by an elected committee of parents. It provides full-time day care for twenty-five children aged 2 to 5 years. The Nursery has had a tradition, since it was started in 1976, of strong parent involvement in the lesbian, feminist and trade union movements. This is an important factor, says the management committee, bearing in mind the accusations of anti-trade union and anti-lesbian bias. The Nursery was part of the unionisation drive of Hackney community nursery workers, while the management and parents with children at the Nursery include active trade unionists.

Staff Petition

Over the course of recent months, the relationship between the Management Committee and the staff has soured. One respected and experienced worker left because of this. Two children were taken away from the Nursery by their parents because of the bad feeling. Eventually in early March a petition-- signed by 5 of the 10 workers-- was presented to the Management Committee. It called their attention to the problems amongst the staff. Unless something was done two more highly experienced members of staff were about to resign. At a stormy open meeting held shortly afterwards, attended by both staff and parents, a number of serious complaints were made concerning Janet Pearce and Liz Thomas. It appeared that these complaints were upheld by 21



Pic: Pam Isherwood (City Limits)

of the 25 parents with children at the nursery.

Suspension

At this point, the Management Committee appeared to have mishandled the situation. Without any properly conducted further hearing it deemed the allegations serious enough to ask for their resignations. When both Janet Pearce and Liz Thomas refused to resign, the Committee promptly sacked them. Their union NUPE insisted however that they had every right to be suspended on full pay pending the holding of a disciplinary panel. This was subsequently done. In the course of the lengthy hearing lasting over 30 hours, over 20 witnesses were called and a total of 27 allegations were discussed.

The two workers had an independent observer, Councillor Denise Robson, and were represented by NUPE official Bernie Grant.

Panel's Decisions

The general conclusions of the panel in Janet Pearce's case were that her conduct as a child care worker fell below the required standard and her relationships with parents and staff were unsatisfactory. Liz Thomas was dismissed based on a number of allegations concerning the neglect of road safety and the children within her care.

The Two Workers Reply

For their part the two workers replied that they were being victimised by the

Continued on back page

It's our birthday and we'll shout if we want to!

INSIDE THIS SPECIAL ISSUE:

Sixteen pages!

- Special double page feature on ten years in Hackney.
- Pull-out 4 page feature produced by the Federation of Hackney Tenants Associations.
- Working Classes: Ken Worpole on the WEA.
- Hackney's radical history over 200 years: Sheila Rowbotham on East London's early feminists and socialists.
- Inside Left looks at the long march of the left through Hackney Council.
- CND Legal Action Group New pub column! Poems What's On listings Tube guards

Even with the extra pages we've printed this month, we've still not had enough space to print all the contributions we received. Many apologies to those who've missed out.

TENTH BIRTHDAY ISSUE!



NEW YOPS FOR OLD!

Hackney Council Officers are negotiating with the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) to take responsibility for 700 places under the government's new Youth Training Scheme (YTS).

MSC scheme offers genuine training opportunities," said Caroline Blythe. "It should end the exploitation which was the problem with the previous YOP scheme."

Caroline Blythe of the Economic Development Unit told HPP that the MSC has agreed in principle to a package that would make the Council the primary youth training employer and administrator in the Borough. The Council would expand existing workshops like Belfast Road to take 400 people, and another 300 young people would be assigned for work experience on employer's premises. As part of their "integrated training" Hackney schemers would be entitled to at least 2 days' off the job education at Hackney College.

The Council also intends to "top up" the £24 weekly allowance to a more realistic level.

AN END TO EXPLOITATION?

"The Council's proposal represents a significant attempt to ensure that the

Earlier in April a varied collection of trade unionists, community activists, voluntary sector training scheme operators and two unemployed people (both of whom were over 21 years old) gave up a beautiful spring saturday afternoon to attend a forum on the YTS organised by Hackney Community Action (HCA) and the Trade Union Support Unit (TUSU).

HCA Chair David Green described the Council's proposal as a "sad shambles" that changes shape each day. At one point the Council was planning to take on 900 trainees itself and to farm out another 300 to private employers. This would have accounted for almost all of the borough's school leavers. The plan has since been scaled down.

The HCA/TUSU meeting seemed to feel that the YTS was being used to undermine trade union influence.

Continued on back page



POLICE PLOT

Fine money

Dear HPP,

I would like to make an appeal for financial support on behalf of the Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign.

Our aim is the legal defence for those arrested on the three demonstrations lead by and for black youths to express support for a demand for a public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach. We need money to pay fines, Solicitors and to fund the gathering of witnesses' evidence.

We are a new organisation formed by defendants for defendants and their supporters. We need to meet urgent costs to counter the threat, as we see it, to black peoples' rights to demonstrate without fear of intimidation or criminalisation—a monitoring in conjunction with the NCCL, CAPA, the Unions, etc. that will bring the community closer to find out what happened to Colin Roach in Stoke Newington Police Station on 12 January 1983.

Yours faithfully,
Barry Ledgister, Assistant Secretary of the Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign, c/o Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2.

Advertisement

Dear HPP,

The Metropolitan Police is embarked on an ambitious programme to rebuild its effectiveness in the fight against crime.

The confidential minutes of an address by Sir Kenneth Newman to the Chief Executives of London Boroughs show that a reasonably clear and phased battle plan has been laid down. Highest priority is attached to an effort to build up the range of street and neighbourhood contacts and to feed the data into a sophisticated computer-based information crunching process capable of churning out the material on which district Superintendents can plan.

In general terms they will work up consensus-building proposals designed for presentation to Scarman-model Police-Community Consultative Committees. The purpose will be to legitimate the policing strategy, to coopt the community leaders into taking responsibility for police tactics and crime prevention strategies and, as far as possible, to take the steam out of politically based demands for greater police accountability.

Internally, a higher, more reliable information base for targetting muggers and burglars would be created. This would involve secret videos of high crime streets and premises and a chance to cut

down the purely random police interference which causes most agro.

The plan which may be effective in some areas, presupposes that potential members of police-community liaison committees and the various statutory agencies (such as local government departments) are anxious to be coopted into a process of social engineering and manipulation.

CRUCIAL

In the crime-ridden inner London Borough of Hackney local councillors and key community organisations, including the crucial organisations that have real roots in the black community, are saying that they want to work with the police on a different basis and - failing that - not at all.

Hackney Council, while anxious to get something off the ground (its own proposals will be withdrawn on July 11 if no positive response is received from the Mome Office), is therefore insisting that liaison takes place under the auspices of the local authority committee structure, subject to scrutiny by the public. Since the Home Office seems unlikely on recent form to agree to this - falsely asserting that it would imply police accountability which it certainly does not - the stage is set for confrontation after July 11.

Yours,

Brynley Heaven
(Chair, Hackney Council Police Committee).

Goals of Progress

Dear HPP,

I'm writing to clear up any false impressions your readers may have gleaned from John Rehahn's letter in the April issue about the policies and practices of Hackney Municipal Communist Party.

Commenting on your allegedly 'one-sided coverage' of the recent Council dispute with NUPE over the dismissal of a senior member of staff, John misunderstands our principled support for Council bargaining and disciplinary procedures as agreed between unions and management for many years. Defence of those basic negotiating positions is fundamental to us all as trade unionists, and when they are circumvented or ignored as in the recent dispute, we need to back them up irrespective of the personal attributes or failings of the individuals victimised. This is no more than principled trade unionism and it is surprising that anyone should misinterpret it as anything else.

The Municipal Branch of the Communist Party has always conducted its political work openly and democratically, not being afraid to voice our criticisms of Council policies but continually seeking to forge alliances with progressive groups and individuals to further our mutual aims of improving services in the Borough and defending the jobs and conditions of the Council workforce.

We invite those who share these goals to join with us in campaigning for them and hope that HPP readers and supporters are clear about where we stand as Communists.

Yours comradely,
Steve Tucker, Branch Sec.
Municipal Communist Party.

NO to private contractors

The National Union of Public Employees has launched a campaign against the use of private contractors in the National Health Service. Tom Sawyer, their Deputy General Secretary explained that NUPE was now on the offensive against Fowler's plan to sell off ancillary services to the Tory Party's big business friends.

"The work done by cleaners, laundry workers and catering staff in the service gives value for money that is second to none. This latest move to encourage privatisation by instructing authorities to put out to tender NHS ancillary work is just another attempt to smash trade union organisation after last year's long and bitter dispute."

lower standards

There are dangers and risks in using private contractors in the NHS and NUPE is showing how falling standards and insecure working conditions which occur as a result of privatisation are the real threat to patient care.

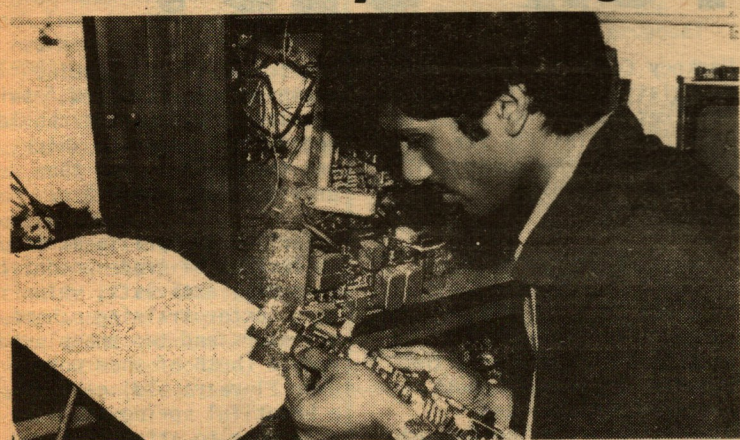
In some cases significant costs have been incurred in supervising the standards of a contract. Furthermore, while initial tender prices may cut costs, these subsequently rise dramatically or standards fall.

higher costs

By way of example, in neighbouring Haringey, the hospital window cleaning service has been carried out by private contractors for a number of years. On many occasions complaints about poor results were answered by the window cleaners on duty - they had been instructed to use cold water without any added detergents in order to save costs. Grease and other hygiene problems were not being solved by the use of just cold water. The situation became so bad that a new contract had to be taken out at a higher cost for a standard of service that the health authority thought they should have been getting in the first place!

Health workers here in Hackney need to take up these arguments and act in defence of their jobs should they come under threat. HPP would like to hear details of any threats to privatise local services and of any action planned in defence of jobs in the area.

'It's the best way of working'



Danny and Bernie left school with little chance of finding decent employment. They learnt TV repair on a government training scheme. Now they run Alpha Omega - a co-operative business of their own, repairing TVs and hi-fi. They're free to work the way they want, and are branching out into audio design.

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Hackney Co-operative Developments gives free help to local people who want to set up workers' co-ops. If you have an idea for a workers' co-op, or if you'd like to find out more about working in one, come and see us and we'll give you the assistance you need.

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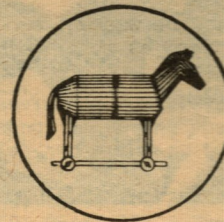
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HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

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LEFT MARCH

I thought that my role here tonight would be to present a brief recap of the political high and low lights of the last ten years. To begin at the beginning. In 1973, Hackney Council was just recovering from the biggest shock of its life. Just two years previously, it had been under the control of the Tories who, totally unprepared for office, had suddenly found themselves in command in 1968. It seems almost inconceivable now, but in 1968 virtually every borough in London went Tory (the same year, it has been pointed out since, that many people thought that revolution was on us worldwide. Workers and students uniting in France. Mass anti-war protest in the US. Riots in Tokyo. And in perfidious Albion... the Tories take over!)

This left a legacy of bitterness that rankles amongst some Labour councillors to this day. It is still not unknown for John Kotz to stiffen with rage and shout at Joe Lobenstein, mocking him for what he did when he led the Council between 1968 and 1971.

Although the leadership of the Council became known in later days as the Old Guard the actual leaders were not so old. Stanley Clinton Davis (for some time

both an MP and a Councillor) Lou and Sally Sherman, Martin Ottolangui and John Kotz, while not exactly all in the first flush of youth, were - in fact still are - middle-aged. What gave the Council then the air of great antiquity was the back bench Councillors, on whom they could rely for absolute support. Some of these were incredibly ancient, and a few were completely gaga. This had the side effect that a number of them popped off at fairly frequent intervals, sometimes causing inconvenient by-elections.

OPPOSITION

In 1974, a small, slightly organised and somewhat disparate opposition emerged, inside the Labour group. Some of these were new, often middle-class Labour activists. Some were Hackney born-and-breds, apparently committed socialists unconcerned with political expediency. This had an enormous effect on the Council, and huge rows rumbled over the whole period it was in office. The left were always being disciplined and at one stage wholesale expulsions from the Labour group took place.

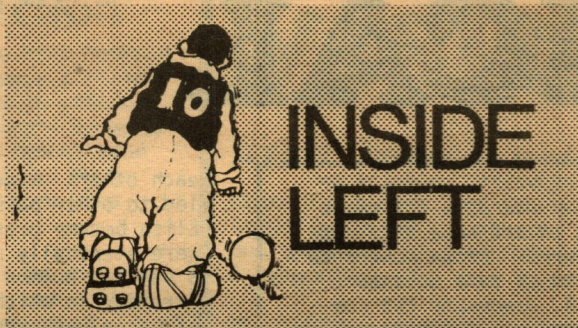
In the 1978 election, things began to change. A large number of new Councillors

were elected, largely owner-occupiers living in the better areas in the more middle-class wards in Hackney North. The Labour Party itself had changed, and in some wards it became impossible to move without bumping into stripped-pine Renaults and wall-to-wall muesli lifestyles. There was a short-lived attempt to set up a Broad Left caucus. As they were always in a minority and, at the start, took a principled stand against allowing themselves being co-opted into power by being given committee chairs, they fell apart. Then the co-option process started and the chairs and vice-chairs started being handed out. Anthony Kendall had the misfortune to be fired from his vice-chair for being awkward about the damp problems on the Smalley estate.

As the reselections and deselections went on in the Labour Party during the run up to the 1982 elections, it became clear that the Old Guard Kotz leadership would be in a minority on the new Council. And so it

proved. The leadership passed to Anthony Kendall in a fairly bloodless coup. The deputy became Peter Kahn, who had once been thought of as the most raving of the raving left class of 78. We also saw the emergence of the "professional Labour politician" (to quote the Guardian) in the person of, amongst others, Brynley Heaven, who, it seems, has started insisting that newspapers print his age, since he is fed up with being told how young he looks.

The last ten years have been no fun in local government. Things were bad enough under Labour, but they were a picnic compared with the last four years of Thatcher. The Left may have completed its long march through Hackney's institutions, but does it have the energy, the commitment, the radicalism and, most crucially, the support to go forward. No one really thought that you could ever get socialism in one borough - but never has it been so obviously vital to change the government before changing anything else.



INSIDE
LEFT

hackney legal action group

The Legal Action Group is a group of lawyers, advice workers, social workers, journalists and others who are concerned to improve legal services to the community, particularly to those living in areas such as Hackney. The National group was set up in 1971. The Hackney group was established in 1975, and remains one of the most active local groups in the country.

Initially the group's energy was directed towards the provision of free legal services by lawyers. Weekly advice sessions were set up in Hoxton and Homerton, areas which were not covered by existing agencies. An emergency telephone service operates every weekend. By dialing 986 9891 the caller will be put in touch with a lawyer. The weekend scheme is not used as much as it could be, but we hope that

an advertising campaign over the next few months will ensure more widespread knowledge of the service.

Through urban aid applications we have pressed the case for a second law centre in the Borough. The group has also sought to plug gaps in local lawyers' legal expertise through education and training. Immigration and nationality law is of vital importance to many people in the borough—yet these subjects have no place in the professional legal syllabuses. Our intensive ten week course on immigration law was vastly oversubscribed; in fact, the difficulty was to ensure adequate local representation, since applications were received from lawyers throughout London. Our next course, in May and June, will discuss using the law to secure repairs to rented accommodation, both council and privately owned.

Speakers at our monthly meetings have included some nationally known figures: Professors Laurie Taylor and John Griffith on prison secrecy and 'Law Lords' against Fares Fair' respectively, and Joe Haines, who sat on the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure. Often the general theme of speakers is law reform, either a pending piece of legislation, such as the current Police Bill, or an area of law in

need of change, for example Inquests. Our aims in this respect are partly educational and partly political—to mobilise support or opposition as the group decides. In recent months, we have been writing to MP's, local lawyers and others to express our opposition to the Police Bill. The group also made lengthy submissions to the Royal Commissions on Legal Services and Criminal Procedure.

Our work with other groups has resulted in a couple of publications. The defence committee formed after arrests during anti-fascist activities in Brick Lane in 1978 invited our participation and legal input in a booklet dealing with the arrests and court proceedings. With Off-Centre we produced a Kids Rights booklet which has had a nationwide distribution. This is one direction into which we hope to channel our energies in the future—working with other groups as a legal resource.

Membership is open to anyone who lives and/or works in the borough and is concerned about legal services to the community. We meet on the first Thursday of each month at the Law Centre, 236 Mare Street, E8. For further information, contact Adam Griffith 986 8446 or Brendan Kelly 986 5774.

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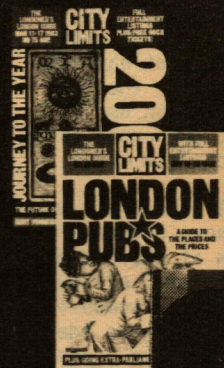
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RADICAL HACKNEY

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS HAS BEEN PROVIDING COVERAGE OF THE RADICAL SCENE IN HACKNEY FOR A DECADE - BUT THERE EXISTS A TRADITION OF RADICALISM IN THE AREA THAT GOES BACK MUCH FURTHER. HERE LOCAL AUTHOR SHEILA ROWBOTHAM DESCRIBES THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN THIS MOVEMENT. OPPOSITE KEN WORPOLE OF THE W.E.A. DISCUSSES THE CONTINUING ROLE OF INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ORGANISATIONS.

In Hackney there is a great tradition of women's involvement in the radical, socialist and anarchist movements. In some cases their involvement has led them to question their position as women and to think about the connections between socialism and feminism.

Mary Wollstonecraft was the best known author writing about women at the end of the 18th century, although there were other women thinking about these ideas. People don't write books in complete isolation. In the Vindication of the Rights of Women she wrote about how the radical ideas of the French Revolution relate to the transformation of women's condition.

She thought that men were oppressed as well as women, but she said that there were some loopholes out of which a man might creep and dare to think and act for himself, whereas for a woman it was a Herculean task, because she had difficulties peculiar to her sex to overcome, that require almost superhuman powers. Her own life was very dramatic. She came from an unhappy family background and supported herself from writing when that was a very unusual thing for a woman to do.

In 1784 she came to Newington Green and set herself up as a teacher in a large house. She met and became a close friend of a man called James Burn, a schoolmaster, who was known to be kind to children and animals and had a reputation for rescuing netted birds and upturned beetles when on country walks!

She also came to know a number of other men and women: there were a Mrs Cockburn and a Mrs Disney, who have been completely forgotten, and a schoolmaster called John Hewlett, who had a school at Shacklewell.

There were 'bluestocking' women writers, Ann Jebb and Anna Barbauld, after whom Barbauld Road in Stoke Newington may be named. All this adds up to a dissenting community forced into radicalism because people were pushed to the outside by society with women who were earning their own way independently.

Eliza Sharples

Mary Wollstonecraft was brought into contact with ideas that were even further to the left by Dr Price. He proposed that a congratulatory letter be sent to those involved in the French Revolution and this provoked a reaction from the Conservative thinker, Burke. Mary wrote The Vindication of the Rights of Man to defend her friend. Tom Paine followed this with his book The Rights of Man, and then she wrote the Vindication of the Rights of Women, probably the first well-known book on the position of women.

Another woman who was less well-known, but had a very interesting life and lived in Hackney about this time was Eliza Sharples. Through her it is possible to get a glimpse of the new face of radicalism early in the 19th Century, in which the connection between free thought and reason and feminism was made. Eliza Sharples was the daughter of a Manchester manufacturer. She had been very religious but she heard a radical speaker called Richard Carlile, who had written about the position of women and love. He was a bookseller and a journalist, and had been imprisoned for blasphemy in 1819. He edited a paper in the 1820s called the Republican, in which he supported women's right to contraceptive information. He also published material which gave practical advice on contraception.

Eliza Sharples and Richard Carlile had a correspondence about the beauty of

each others minds - this led to other passions, and Eliza became pregnant. They were eventually married in a village common law ceremony in which a flitch of bacon was presented. Eliza went on to speak at radical and anti-clerical meetings and wrote articles about the new Eve, who had bitten the apple of liberty. Carlile began to think about a new religion in which he was a prophet and Eliza was a priestess. She wasn't so keen on this idea.

When Carlile died, Eliza went to live in an Owenite community. Although these were supportive of women, life was difficult for those who lived there as they were outside 'polite' society. As the wider Chartist movement grew, many of the radical personal stances for which Eliza had stood became viewed with growing hostility.

In 1839 Eliza was living at 13 Maidstone Street, Hackney, where she was associated with a secular hall, and in 1855 at 10 Devonshire Place, Stoke Newington where she was superintendent of the Temperance Hall. In those days there were definitely two wings of the left - the drinking left and the non-drinking left!

1st International

In 1838 there is a reference to an East London Female Democratic Association, whose secretary was Mrs Neesam and there was also an East London Female Chartist Temperance Group. Bronterre O'Brien was a man who was involved first of all in the Chartist movement and then later in the working class radical movement. He is buried in Stoke Newington cemetery - but I have not been able to find his grave. He was later in the First International, where he was criticised by Marx, for his sympathy to what Marx called 'feminism and other crotchets'. There was quite a dispute in the First International between Marx and his supporters and the American socialist feminists, who thought women's liberation could not be postponed until the emancipation of the working class.

There were branches of the First International in Hackney in the 1870s. At a branch in Hackney Road, there were thirty members of whom eight were women.

New unionism

In the 1880s the first Marxist organisation in the socialist movement was the Social Democratic Federation, and Eleanor Marx, Marx's daughter, spoke regularly in the East End on its behalf. This later split into the Socialist League - until this divided too, with a group of anarchist communists taking over the paper Commonweal. They were very active in Hackney and included some women. They had an East London Women's Association. Mrs Shack and Miss Sumpter were among the speakers when they had a May Day meeting in Victoria Park. Mrs Shack spoke in East London on 'how women can help the socialist movement.' The report said: 'there was a lively discussion, with some female comrades taking part'. Mrs Shack conflicted with Marx over the issue of protective legislation and with Engels over the state. Annie Besant who was involved in the matchgirls strike also spoke regularly in Hackney.



This was part of a wider rebellion among unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Eleanor Marx was active in recruiting men and women to this new unionism which made demands of equal pay and child benefit. She too spoke in East London and Hackney.

Sylvia Pankhurst

In 1909, Sylvia Pankhurst came to live in Bow. When the suffrage movement split over socialism in 1914, she opened a maternity welfare clinic in a pub called the Gunners Arms, which she renamed the Mothers Arms. They created a nursery as well for the children of women in a co-operative toy factory. This is where the relationships between self-help and the origins of welfare are first defined.

By 1917 the Women's Suffrage Federation had shifted from the demand only for women's suffrage to the demand for adult suffrage. This was a big argument at the time because the original demand for votes for women would have mainly affected just

privileged women, but although the socialist movement said they wanted adult suffrage they didn't do much about it. By 1917 things had changed. When they organised a demonstration to demand adult suffrage, Hackney Trades Council offered its support. However, although the trade union organisations came in force, with a band, there is a disappointed note in the minutes that 'the women of East London haven't turned out'.

Suffragettes

In 1918, the Women's Suffrage Federation had set up a Dalston branch at 175 Dalston Lane, where they painted the front room purple. Later the lady who lived there complained that the colour was very difficult to cover! The suffragists had links with the Herald League, Socialist League, Socialist Sunday schools, and the socialist newspaper Clarion. By 1918 they were affiliated to Hackney Labour Party.

There were men's organisations in the East End supporting the feminists. These included the Rebels, the Social and Political Union, the East London Men's Society and the unlikely-sounding organisation, East London Cowboys Drum and Fife Band. The Lansbury family were also strong supporters.

The Hackney secretary of the Women's Suffrage Federation was Mrs Ives, who was a friend of George Lansbury, the socialist.

World War

In the First World War both the feminists and the socialists split painfully over whether to support the war. Sylvia Pankhurst spoke at a meeting against the war in the Brotherhood Church in Southgate Road, which was broken up by jingoists and phony soldiers sent by the government to disrupt meetings.

After the war, Freddy Demuth, Marx's illegitimate son, lived in Hackney, and spent his last years with Laura Payne, widow of Alfred Payne, who had been one of the founders of Hackney Labour Party, and was the Mayoress of Hackney in 1919. Early in the 1920s the socialist feminist Stella Browne spoke at a Stoke Newington Labour Party meeting at a synagogue, in support of a nurse Daniels, who had been under attack in Edmonton for giving birth control advice in maternity welfare centres. Unemployed women also began to organise.

This was just one of the campaigns fought by local women in the 1920s. There must be women around now who have memories of this time and of issues like these. It would be good if they could be sent to HPP, so that what women have done in Hackney will be remembered.

SHEILA ROWBOTHAM

merry-go-round



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Working Classes

The Hackney branch of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) was revived in 1971, after years of non-activity, as a result of direct political concerns. People from various political groupings, trade unions and local single-issue campaigns got together because they felt that the kind of adult education provided by the statutory educational authorities was dull, safe and quite unresponsive to local issues. It was also proudly non-interventionist. Car maintenance for the men, dress-making for the women was very much the pattern of things.

Early WEA courses dealt with such pressing local political issues as the 1971 Housing Finance Act, new theories on the teaching of reading, local working class history, women's studies and the history of popular music. The majority of the classes were successful. Branch meetings were well attended and so were the classes. The Hackney WEA made a bit of a name for itself for always having something new, unexpected in each year's programme of classes — micro-chips in 1976, alternative ideas about mental health, and so on.

In recent years, though, (and we certainly aren't complaining), local statu-

tory provision in adult education has improved enormously. With outreach workers, more resources, new commitments to the educational needs of ethnic minorities, to women's courses and so on, the role of the WEA has in many ways been made redundant. And certainly the Hackney WEA, which has to organise all its classes, run its publicity programme and pay fees to the London District WEA out of students' fees, can in no way compete with ILEA's marvellous new scheme whereby non-waged people can attend hundreds of different classes and courses for just £1.

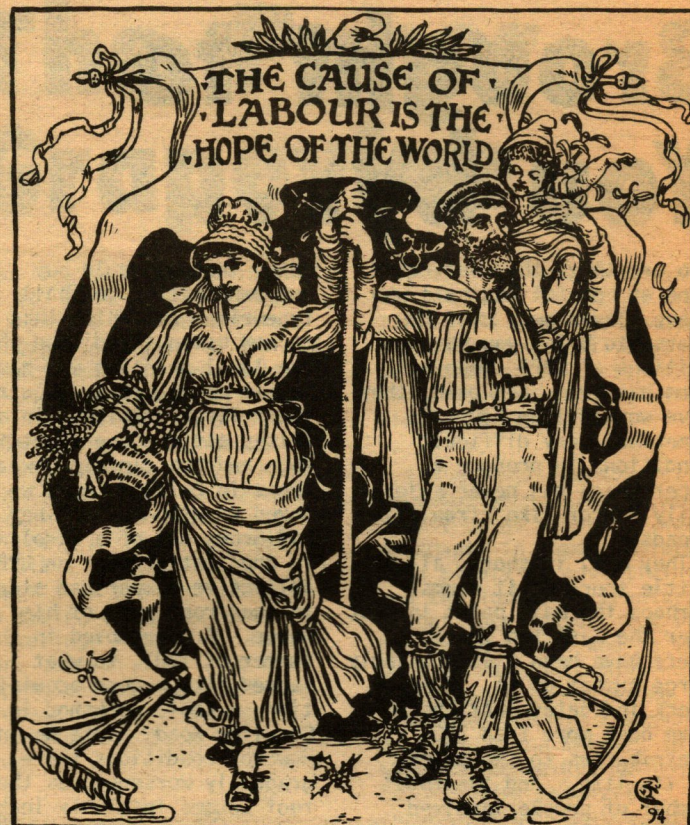
With all these marvelous things being done by imaginative state provision locally, is it time for those in the voluntary sector to strike camp, close up shop or come down from the barricades (will the last person leaving the voluntary sector please switch off the lights).

This isn't just our dilemma. It affects many forms of non-statutory provision, whether in child-care, literacy provision, welfare organisations, cultural organisations and many others. If progressive local authorities can do the job more efficiently, and as part of its subsidised local services, surely the non-statutory projects should throw their lot in with

these local councils. At present this looks an attractive proposition. But what if strong, centralising, conservative trends at some point in the future even rolled back achievements of borough councils like Hackney or those of the present GLC? (Don't forget that Hackney had a Conservative council between 1968 and 1972!) If the voluntary sector were to disappear there would be no oppositional centres of ideas and alternative practices.

Pioneers

In fact the voluntary sector has pioneered many of the ideas and forms of practice which have been eventually adopted by progressive local councils and educational bodies. Just thinking about adult education, for example: oral history, local history, writers' workshops, courses on alternative technology, women's studies, women's self-defence, self-help forms of therapy, ideas about community care in the field of mental health, black cultural studies—all of these, almost without exception, started off in various informal or non-statutory educational kinds of discussion groups of educational provision, even though they are now firmly on the mainstream agenda in many educational institutions.




Currently the Hackney WEA, in common with other voluntary organisations, has difficulty in sustaining momentum. The local statutory provision is so good, is there really anything for us to do? We think so, because from time to time people do come to us with ideas for classes which they would either like to run or attend which, though at first appearing marginal or eccentric, later become the new common-sense. When Dave Davies started talking about micro-chips at branch

meetings in the mid-1970's, people started examining their nails for dirt, began to read the posters on the walls and wondered what he was going on about.

We think there's still a need for the non-statutory sector in adult education as much as we believe there's a need for an independent local press. Such as... (Fanfare) ...the Hackney People's Press!

Ken Worpole

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MAY 21st - JUNE 5th

LEISURE SERVICES

**SPORTS
FOR ALL SORTS !**

Get your brochure now from libraries, sports centres etc.

Brought to You by...

Who are they, this dedicated band of hopeful radicals who have slaved away over ten years, to bring you 90 editions of HPP? None of them has ever been paid; they have worked long hours in sometimes very difficult conditions to produce a paper which has never enjoyed Daily Mirror-like circulation trends.

They are, in short, all a little touched, it seems! Perhaps the main point is that over the last ten years, there have been a surprisingly large number of us. A rough check indicates that there have been more than 200 contributors to the paper in its life. And the total number of people involved more directly, as members of the collective that undertake the production and distribution processes, has been somewhere between 60 and 80.



The personnel involved have changed completely over the ten years. None of us were around when the paper first came out in 1973. We do boast (if that's the right word) one person whose memories go back over eight years.

We haven't varied our production processes much. One weekend a month we try to do as much of the typing and layout as possible. For many years we used to take over the publishing project room at the top of Centreprise. A generous donation in 1977

meant that we could buy our own electric golfball typewriter (on which this is now being typed) and when the local printing and badge-making co-op Trojan acquired their first premises, in a filthy attic above a betting shop and two clothing sweatshops in Dalston Lane, we moved in with them. They had grown out of a sideline in duplicating that an HPP collective member had started in the front room of his house. Trojan moved in the summer of 1981, to what seemed like a good acquisition, a small workshop in Grayling Road, Stoke Newington. However conditions there gradually worsened, as the roof became insolubly leaky, and we have been fortunate that they are on the move again, to the purpose-built factories set up for co-ops in Bradbury Street, Dalston. There we will be staying with them, for the time being at least.

Thanks

More than anyone else, we owe thanks to the two organisations that have nurtured us (and put up with our clutter) over the last ten years, Centreprise and Trojan. Without them, there wouldn't be an HPP. And there wouldn't be one either if you, the readers, hadn't kept buying it over this time. To them and to you, thanks.

As we have tried to point out in the article above, HPP is published by a voluntary group of people, who are always looking for people of a masochistic frame of mind to join them. If you want to write, draw, take photographs, lay-out, sell, distribute or otherwise help HPP, for absolutely no earthly reward (except a warm inner glow!) then get in touch. Or better still come along to our next editorial meeting, on **TUESDAY 17th MAY** at Centreprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8 at 8pm.

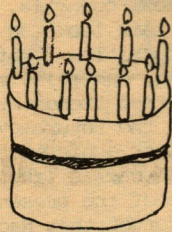
ADVERTISEMENT

Happy 10th birthday to HPP from Hackney Trades Union Council

The Labour movement has never had a fair press from multinational newspaper owners. Hackney Trades Union Council welcomes the fair coverage given to the movement by Hackney People's Press.

Hackney Trades Union Council
15 Horton Road, London E8.

TEN YEARS OF HPP:



Looking at a six-inch pile of dusty yellowing newspapers does not usually inspire awe and wonder. However my desk is creaking under the weight of ten years of HPP; each one of them was nursed through frenzied weekends of labour and late-night lay-out sessions by successive generations of Hackney radicals. Each issue was born in struggle—most often against what we in the newspaper trade call "cash flow problems", other times against the paralysing disease of apathy.

HPP was formed in May 1973 by the amalgamation of two alternative papers: Hackney Gutter Press, which saw its mission as promoting a libertarian socialist approach to worker's struggle, and Hackney Action, a more community-oriented paper produced at Centreprise. HPP provides a direct link back to many of the strands of late '60's radicalism; from feminism and Under Fives campaigns to squatting and anti-homelessness fights.

Crispin Aubrey, one of the founders of HPP, found himself in the national headlines in February. He and another journalist, Duncan Campbell, were arrested after meeting with John Berry, a former military intelligence corporal. The 'ABC' Official Secrets trials dragged on for almost two years and resulted in convictions for ridiculously minor 'conspiracy' charges.


PROLIFERATION

Throughout the '70's HPP recorded the proliferation of community groups, best exemplified by the development of two small groups, People in Partnership and Hackney Link-Up, into Hackney Community Action. HCA stemmed from the stream of government funds that were earmarked for Hackney under the Partnership programme. In a summary of the 1970's, Ken Worple wrote: "Partnership was to become for many people in Hackney what the cargo cults were for Trobriand Islanders." From next year Partnership money will start to dry up.

HPP also reflects the growing institutionalisation of community politics. Many voluntary sector activists whose names graced the pages of HPP in the '70's, for example Anthony Kendall and Patrick Kodikara, now have their hands on the levers of power in the Town Hall. Does anyone remember the old '60's fear of co-optation?

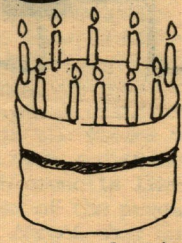
Continued on Page 7

Events Month by Month

- | | |
|------------|--|
| May 1973 | *Hackney People's Press launched as a successor to Hackney Gutter Press and Hackney Action. |
| | *Four of the Stoke Newington 8 (a.k.a. Angry Brigade) sentenced to prison |
| | *Three day teacher's strike over conditions and London allowance. |
| June 1973 | *Hackney Women's Aid Centre opens two shelters for battered women. |
| Nov 1973 | *Strike at Lesney's for a £7 pay increase (Weekly wage for an assembly line worker: £21) |
| March 1974 | *GLC proposes a motorway that would replace the congested route from Hackney Wick to Highbury. This would involve 'realigning' Morning Land and Graham Road. All shops on the west side of Kingsland High Street between Ridley Road and Dalston Junction would be demolished. The plan sparked the first of many 'Stop the Road' campaigns. |
-
- 
- 1978 Anti-Racist March
- | | |
|------------|---|
| July 1975 | *HPP ceases publication for 10 months. |
| May 1976 | *HPP returns with a report on Homerton Project: "New Life in Old Library." The planned Community Centre was later christened Chat's Palace. |
| July 1976 | *Hackney Law Centre Opens. |
| Sept 1976 | *400 redundancies at Metropolitan and Hackney Hospitals. |
| | *BR plan redevelopment of Liverpool Street Station. Broad Street threatened. |
| Jan 1977 | *Metropolitan Hospital closed. |
| Feb 1977 | *Crispin Aubrey, John Berry and Duncan Campbell arrested for conspiring to contravene the Official Secrets Act. |
| June 1977 | *National Front hold election meeting at Shore-ditch School. Three day strike at the Hackney Gazette against NF advert. |
| Aug 1977 | *NF activities escalate: Centreprise firebombed, other bookstores attacked. |
| Sept 1977 | *Anti-Racist march from Shoreditch to Victoria Park, the largest in Hackney since the 1930's. |
| Dec 1977 | *Partnership Scheme launched; £5 million to spent in the first year, £9 million p.a. for the next 4 years after that. |
| April 1978 | *80,000 people attend Victoria Park Anti-Nazi Carnival |
| May 1977 | *"Hope at last for Hackney as Council Swings Left" Front page headline on elections. |
| Aug 1978 | *Another NF assault on Centreprise; 3 fascists piss on the nursery floor. |
| Oct 1978 | *Chat's Palace opens. |
| Nov 1978 | *HPP reports the notorious 'Leggett Question' and is forced to raise £100 for charity to avoid libel suit. |
| | *Second 'ABC' trial convicts Aubrey, Campbell and Berry on minor Official Secrets charges. |
| Dec 1978 | *Michael Ferreira stabbed by racists in Stoke Newington High Street. Police refuse to call an ambulance and 'question' Michael for 20 minutes. He died later in Hospital. |

Continued on Page 7

THE STORIES SO FAR



Events Month by Month

- March 1979 *NUPE workers strike for £60 wage from Council.
*Hackney Anti-Nuclear Group publicise the dangers of nuclear waste transport through the borough.
- April 1979 *Hackney teacher Blair Peach killed by SPG in Southall.
*RIO opens.
- May 1979 *Smalley Estate scandal; within weeks of moving in to the new flats tenants found conditions unbearable due to damp caused by design faults.
*Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government elected.
- July 1979 *St. Leonard's and St. Matthews hospitals threatened with closure (sound familiar?)
- Dec 1979 *DoE enquiry into National Front activities at 'Excalibur House', their Shoreditch Headquarters.
*First appearance in HPP of 'Inside Left', the ace correspondent who covers Hackney Behind Closed Doors.



- Jan 1980 *Half of the Lesney's workforce made redundant.
*People in Partnership and Hackney Link-Up plan merger to form Hackney Community Action.
- March 1980 *'Save the Marshes' campaign wins reprieve for Walthamstow Marshes.
*Bootstrap Enterprises and Hackney Co-operative Development agency both begin operation to promote worker's co-ops in Hackney.
- June 1980 *Hackney Central Station opens.
- Aug 1980 *HPP's biggest fan, Cllr. John Kotz, says that every library in the borough should keep HPP-- in the Fiction Section. Nice one John!
- Sept 1980 *Matthew O'Hara dies after being denied insulin while in Pentonville prison.
- Dec 1980 *National Front forced to vacate 'Excalibur House'
- May 1981 *Centreprise celebrates its 10th birthday.
- July 1981 *Uprising; local people clash with Police in Dalston and Stoke Newington. HPP reporter clubbed to the ground by the boys in blue.
- Nov 1981 *Centreprise, Chat's Palace, the RIO and HPP all go through periods of crisis. Crisis at HPP thinking up new headlines that don't use the word 'crisis'.
- March 1982
- April 1982 *The Whites of Stoke Newington awarded £50,000 damages for a "savage and inhuman" attack by the local Police.



The Knights outside Stoke Newington Police Station

- May 1982 *Council elections; new left Labour group gain power and promise revolutionary changes -- like Decentralisation.
- June 1982 *Lesney's call in the reciever.
*Stoke Newington Community Centre finally opens at the old Fire Station, Leswin Road.
- Oct 1982 *Police case against the Knight family rejected by Snaresbrook court.
*HPP sets up a "Crunch Fund" to help it through a new financial crisis. (Donations still welcome!)
- Jan 1983 *Colin Roach dies from gunshot wounds at Stoke Newington Police station. 92 people arrested at subsequent demonstrations calling for an enquiry into Colin's death.

In fact the election of a left-leaning Council has made life harder for HPP by depriving us of our easiest targets! We now have to adopt an uncomfortable stance of critical support for Council policies such as decentralisation.

In August 1980 Ace Journalist Inside Left infiltrated Hackney North Labour Party and uncovered strategic plans for the 1981 GLC elections. The local GLC councillor was an ambitious and charismatic man who was leaving safe Hackney North behind ("no tears were shed") to carry the socialist standard to the margins of Paddington. His name?-- Ken Livingstone.

HPP ran its first expose on the National Front ("The New Face of Fascism") in the bad old days of April 1974. The Front had their "headquarters" in an old warehouse in Great Eastern Street, Shoreditch. For the next five years HPP campaigned to kick the Nazis out of their "Excalibur House" HQ.

REPRESSION

The recent police repression of marches calling for an enquiry into Colin Roach's death at Stoke Newington Police Station in January is a painful reminder of the ever-present nature of racism in Hackney.

Looking back at ten years of HPP has created a strange sense of deja vu. The last decade seems to have been one of perennial struggle to defend the living standards of Hackney people against: murderous cuts in the Health Service; in the number of local schools; in public transport and in Council Services. Hackney is not yet the radical, socialist utopia we've all been hoping for.

The occasion of our 10th birthday is not a time for complacency. For us it's a fight just to keep the paper going. In our 50th issue Crispin Aubrey wrote "what the paper never resolved... was exactly who it was writing for and what it was trying to say." To tell the truth, we still haven't! Some of us currently working on the paper often agonise that our main readership seems to consist of council-lors and Council officials who buy the paper to see if they've been mentioned by Inside Left.

If you think providing a platform for local campaigns and a forum for broad political discussion of local issues is a useful function, why not come help us build and improve HPP for its second decade.

The Paper Grapevine

When HPP was founded in 1973, it was part of an informal network of similar papers around the country. The big change that had made this kind of paper possible was the development of offset litho printing techniques during the late 1960s. With a minimal amount of equipment and the co-operation of a friendly printer it became possible to reproduce a paper from your own pasted-up typing and press-down lettering. There was much more control over what the paper looked like - and the process was a lot cheaper than old-fashioned letter press.

Gutter Press and Pavement in Wandsworth. And there are still, all over the country, any number of small area papers produced by tenants and residents groups, on very similar principles.

And what of the future? The East End News tried to set itself up as a radical weekly newspaper in Tower Hamlets, with plenty of advertising and the look of a traditional bright local paper. But it has to be said - and it is what we said all along - that their approach was wrong. They tried to buy themselves a slice of the market, in the time-honoured methods used by many potential capitalist publishing magnates by pouring money into a new enterprise, without creating the demand for the new product. Although they didn't lose as much money as did Sir James Goldsmith with his Now! magazine, tens of thousands of pounds given in good faith by supporters and public bodies has been wasted. The lessons should be learnt from this, and the parallels with Leeds Other Paper carefully noted. It is possible to build up the circulation of a paper by hard work, and by creating a good product, which people will want. Then the paper can be expanded, full-time staff taken on, frequency of publication increased.

Anarchy

Of course, there were disadvantages. A lot of the papers looked extremely unprofessional, as indeed they all were. Many wanted them to look that way: they were an alternative to the straight press. But there can be no doubt that the anarchic look did - and does - tend to put off some potential readers, and that is something that any paper ignores at its peril.

Of course, the alternative/ community newspapers 'movement' has changed considerably over the last ten years. But there are still a surprising number of papers around, and many of them have evolved in quite distinctive ways. Some have become more professional themselves, like Leeds Other Paper, now a weekly news and listings paper, with a circulation of nearly 3,000 and five paid staff (who also run a typesetting co-op which helps subsidise the paper). Many still follow similar paths to HPP, like, in other parts of London, Islington

For year after year, this is what we've wanted to do with HPP. It's still our belief that something could come of it, although we're not foolish enough to say that it won't need an injection of capital, presumably from a public body. Ten years may be a long gestation - but this anniversary issue might just be the start of the germination process.

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HAPPY 10TH FROM HACKNEY COMMUNIST PARTY

**PUT
PEOPLE
FIRST.**

A NALGO Campaign



**PUT
PEOPLE
FIRST.**

A NALGO Campaign

warmly congratulates HPP on ten years erudite digging!

Motion for annual conference DISABLED PEOPLE

Conference notes with concern that the problems of disabled people are increasing in two respects:

- a) the drastically worsening prospects of employment and
- b) the reduction in services provided to enable them to play an active part or useful role in the community.

In order to alleviate this discrimination Conference resolves to:

- 1) campaign nationally and at branch level for all employers to comply with their legal requirement to employ 3% registered disabled persons in their workforce;
- 2) affiliate nationally to the Socialist Disability Action Group and encourage all district councils and branches to do so locally;
- 3) support the National League of the Blind and Disabled in its renewed campaign for a blindness allowance;
- 4) support RADAR in their efforts to extend Invalid Care Allowance to married and cohabiting women and to abolish the "household duties test" requirement of the Non-Contributory Pensions for Married Women, support to include active participation in all future "weeks of action";
- 5) sponsor any registered disabled NALGO member into free membership of their local branch of National League for Blind and Disabled;
- 6) campaign for better access to all buildings;
- 7) campaign for better access to information for blind people as of right (i.e. readers/tape recording service).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

John Rehahn 986 3266 x 355

Hackney NALGO Branch Chair

**PUT
PEOPLE
FIRST.**

A NALGO Campaign

**PUT
PEOPLE
FIRST.**

A NALGO Campaign



Hackney Campaign for
Nuclear Disarmament

Make nuclear disarmament an election issue

Happy 10th birthday HPP!
And thanks for your support.
HCND is just about to enter
its 4th year and is still
growing strong.

This Easter saw the triumphant demonstration of 100,000 people across 'nuclear valley' in Berkshire. Wind and rain and the cheap and nasty smears of Thatcher and Heseltine couldn't dampen the spirit and energy of the people.

Two groups from Hackney took part in blockades of Burghfield Ordnance Factory and Greenham Common Airbase on Easter Thursday. On Good Friday 7 coach loads of Hackney people arrived to join the 14 mile human chain that stretched from Burghfield, via Aldermaston, to Greenham.

One week before the demonstrations HCND held a non-violent direct action (NVDA) day school to prepare people for the blockades. NVDA training is essential for anyone taking part in Civil Disobedience. It is very important to get to know

the people that you are taking action with and to have some knowledge of what might happen if you or someone in your group is arrested. There were role playing games, trust building exercises, informal discussions and a legal briefing. HCND will be organising another NVDA in the near future.

As election fever mounts the threat of another term of Thatcher & Co. becomes real. The implications for CND are obvious; we are calling on people to write to their MP's insisting that they come out clearly against Cruise and Trident. Make nuclear disarmament a vital election issue - write to your MP NOW!

We are also organising a Peace Canvass to take the arguments for nuclear disarmament to people at their front doors. This is one of our best campaign tools and the information we collect on people's attitudes to nuclear weapons and disarmament can be useful for lobbying MPs.

ADVERTISEMENT

Direct Action

On 26 May women from Hackney Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament will stage an action outside Sainsbury's Kingsland High Street to demonstrate to local people how much money they spend on arms each week.

International Women's Day for Disarmament was established last year as an occasion for women to take non-violent direct action against the arms race. Women are encouraged to work for disarmament through their trade union branches, women's groups or in the local community. For more information contact Rowen on 806 6025.

In the last six months HCND has set up two new local groups in Stoke Newington and Clapton to make it easier to campaign on a local level. If you are interested in the activities of the new decentralised HCNS, come to one of our meetings at Dalston Library on Mondays 9 & 16 May (7:30 and ever second Monday after that), or contact:

Clapton
Liz Waugh 986 8335
John Milner (Peace Canvass) 985 9342

Dalston & Victoria Park
Vickie Lukens 806 4461

Stoke Newington
David Martindale 600 9000 (day)

HCND
Tony Barrett 533 2465
Sara Bugden (membership sec.) 806 1519
Andrew Haig (Media Resources) 806 4461

VISIONS

STRANGER by Madeline Froude.

Where I was born, out in the country
It was beautiful, wholesome and clean
But there was no room for outsiders
I escaped as soon as I could

My children, as easy in mean streets
As I was in meadows and moors
If they don't know the cry of the curlew
They won't know the village scold's curse

They'll not suffer displaying their beauty
In pink hair, or earrings or dreads
Their neighbours don't mind - 'it takes all sorts'
Space here is the space of the mind

I blend in, transparent, chameleon
One piece in a patchwork of kinds, but
That crazy see-saw of existence
Makes me stranger to each day I live

It's O.K. to be new in the city
No-one stares or whispers or points
You can find your own kind if you try, so
The future? Let it be...here

TOMORROW'S WORLD by M. MUNRO.

The Imperialist with their greed for power
Have the Atom at last in control
To gamble or play with as they please
Not caring if tomorrow life will cease
With split minds, no eyes to see
No ears to hear the cry of humanity
With thought of destruction onward they go
The result will be distress and Woe.
Chaos and Death on Earth will reign
The Life spirit will release to another plane
Death is Triumphant, standing alone
Will the sacrifice of Jesus be in vain?

SMILE by M. MUNRO.

Your smile is like the sunshine
Breaking through darkened clouds
Giving joy to saddened hearts
Pleasure to all around.

May your smile be always with you,
In this dreadful world of ours
Lifting frowns and sorrows,
Making life worthwhile.

H.C.N.D. by M. MUNRO.

Let us raise our voices, far above the crowd
To give the praise of thankfulness that we're both
safe and sound
Too soon with bomb explosives we might be no more,
Deaf, Dumb and Maimed, can be our future lore

Down with the Governments, down with them galore
But trust in them of false deceit, leading us to
Let us make a stand, staunch, strong and free wax
For side by side We'll triumph, if we united be.

YOUTH CND ROCK THE BOMB

festival for peace

LONDON MAY 7th

Assemble Victoria Embankment 11am
March to Brockwell Park Brixton

Clint Eastwood's General Saint
The Damned • Gallery Macabre
Hazel O'Connor • John Peel
Madness • Style Council

A FUTURE WITHOUT FEAR

HACKNEY YCND: CONTACT ANDY - 249 1501



HCND Diary

May 1: GLC Mayday Festival in Victoria Park. HCND will be there with an exhibition, bookstall, video, food and games.

May 3: Clapton Group Meeting. 44 Cotesbach rd, E5 at 8pm. Discussion on CND election strategy. Tel Harry Stock on 806 6025 for more details.

May 5: Hackney North Labour party and Youth CND meeting to discuss the "Rock the Bomb" Festival in Brixton's Brockwell park. Contact Andy on 249 1501 for more details.

May 7: YCND Festival in Brixton. Assemble Victoria Embankment at 11 am. Details as above.

May 9: HCND General Meeting in Dalston Lane Library, 8pm.

May 16: HCND General Meeting in Dalston Lane Library, 8pm.

May 24: International Women's Day for Disarmament. Action outside Sainsbury's in Kingsland High Street. Contact Rowen for details, 806 6025.

May 26: HCND Media group meeting at 52a Fountayne Rd.

May 28: Hackney Youth CND will be launched today at Chats Palace. In the afternoon there will be films and workshop discussions on aspects of YCND's activities. In the evening there will be a social with a disco. Tell all young people you know about it and come along with them.

STOP PRESS! HCND MEMBERSHIP CRISIS

Only one third of HCND members have renewed their 1983 membership. Please if you have not done so, do it NOW!

HCND MEMBERSHIP FORM

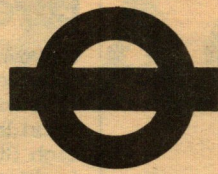
I wish to renew my membership of/ join HCND and enclose a cheque/postal order for 50p (unwaged, OAPs & students) or £2 (others).

Name _____ Tel: _____

Address _____

Please return this to Sara Bugden, 34a Geldstone Rd, N16.

Shooting guards?



London Transport's policy is to transform its underground trains into driver-only operated as soon as it can do so. But what do train staff think of this intention?

Overwhelmingly, if a recent survey of staff at the Upminster depot is any indication, they are against it.

The figures in this survey, which covered 91 people, were about 80% against, 15% for and 4% undecided.

The results of this survey, by a group of IT underground workers sponsored by East Ham ASLEF and NUR branches, have just been published in a report *'They shoot guards don't they?'* Understandably, worry about job losses headed the list of reasons why staff were against the proposed changes, but concern about safety and stress were also common fears.

FEARS FOR FUTURE

About their jobs, staff expressed their fears that there would be no future for them with IT. 'With less than three years' service behind me I can't see myself in employment with IT for much longer.' (guard) 'deeply concerned about my future prospects as a guard..' (guard) and 'fears for my job and my children's future..' (guard/driver)

The fears that the change to driver-only trains might increase safety risks were for both staff

and passengers. One guard said 'In an incident some years ago at Sloane Square a person ran towards a train to get on, hit the side and fell between two cars. Had it not been for a passenger who told the guard, who pulled the emergency handle, a bad accident could have occurred.'

Another, a guard/driver, commented 'By bringing OPO (one person operated) in, IT may as well throw the rule book out of the window. What happens if a driver collapses and passengers enter the cab to find him unconscious? There will be panic and this will lead people onto the track with no-one to assist them. The running of OPO trains is dangerous to the public and for a matter that is solely political, it is to my mind stupid.'

There was anxiety, too, that other kinds of dangers could pose more of a threat in the future: 'one hears a lot of talk of how the OPO buses have made travelling late at night a thing to think twice about. What will happen with only one man to deal with any trouble that arises?'

DRIVER STRESS

Stress, the report says, has already been found to be a problem: 'One has only got to look at the sickness record of drivers on the Victoria Line to see what the level of stress would be like on a OPO train. We cannot allow this to be brought into being.'

One driver explains exactly what the stress would entail: 'From the moment of leaving the depot until reaching your ultimate destination your concentration cannot be relaxed for a single moment because as soon as the train has stopped at the platform you have to walk across the cab, be vigilant while passengers board and alight, then shut the doors, walk back across the cab and get back into the seat before beginning to drive again. It adds to the risk of someone falling between cars and no-one knowing about it.'

IN FAVOUR

Those train staff who were in favour of OPO made it clear that their acceptance was provisional upon a number of conditions being met. These included full consultation with the operators before any line was made OPO, guards to remain employed and be next in line for drivers' jobs, improved pay and conditions and a good and acceptable safety system to be put into operation.

UNDECIDED

Those who did not decide either for or against the scheme said that more information was needed before a reasonable judgement could be made. 'It is not possible at this time to give a positive yes or no vote as the answers to the following questions are not available. What will happen to those displaced? Who will get the

OPO jobs? What will happen to drivers who do not wish to operate the system? What percentage of the guards' pay, including hidden costs, will go to the driver and other staff?'

IT's next move, apparently, will introduce driver-only trains within the next eighteen months. But, according to the report, IT has hardly proved its case that the change would be the right thing for the future of the service. Although it might save some staff costs, it is not going to improve the service for passengers - surely what IT needs if it is to attract more custom - for in London and other cities there is strong evidence to show that OPO worsens the relationship between staff and passengers, nor will it improve conditions for staff. Moreover, although IT has had OPO on the buses since 1966, still it has not, as one driver pointed out, solved the problems that the system has created.

As a final thought, there is evidence that IT originally decided on OPO buses because of shortage of staff, not for efficiency or lower costs. There were indeed staff shortages in the 1960s, but can the same really be said today.

'They shoot guards don't they; can be obtained from the District Line Workers Group, c/o LT Worker, Box 47 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.'

IN BRIEF....

All sports for all sorts

From 21 May to 5 June you will be seeing more people playing sports all over the borough than ever before. For this is when the first ever 'Hackney Sports Festival' will be held.

These two weeks will be filled with lots of different sports, at different places throughout the borough. There are competitions for table tennis, netball and squash... Special events... Chances to try some of those sports that you have often thought of taking up but never quite got round to - why not experiment at last with snorkelling, sub-aqua, dance workshops, volleyball, canoeing and even water polo?

The special events include an over-50s sports day, a disabled people's sports day, ethnic sports day and a grand finale on 5 June at Britannia Sports Centre.

It all sounds like lots of fun either to watch or to join in, so collect your brochure now from libraries, sports centres etc and find out where to go!

More info also from Action Sport on 729 0218.

Support ICR

The Institute of Community Relations, which is supported by Hackney Council, has been refused funds from the Dept. of the Environment. But the ICR is determined to carry on in its work for racial equality and social justice.

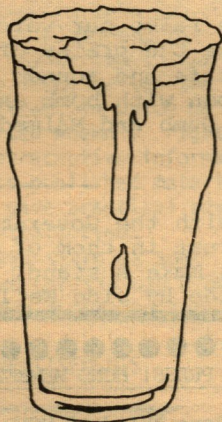
Anyone who would like to help the ICR in its work can write to them at 101 Dunsmore Road, N16 5HT.

pub of the month

As part of this special edition, HPP is starting a Pub of the Month feature. Each month we shall be visiting a local pub to bring you details of establishments which may be new to you.

Having been nominated for this demanding research task on account of a well known partiality to a drop of the old pigs ear, your esteemed reporter found himself at Campbells Free House, at the junction of Bridport Place and Rushton Street, N1, in the south western corner of Hackney.

This is not as easy as you may think, for even with an A to Z Campbells is hard to find. Behind the Britannia Leisure Centre, surrounded by masses of corrugated iron, it is, at first sight, not the most inviting of places in Hackney. But once discovered it turns out to be one of the more pleasant pubs in the area. It is a place that really feels like it is a Public House and not just an impersonal saloon bar. Both staff and locals are easy to talk to, while the beer would put most central London free houses to shame - both on price and quality.



Chudley Bitter is 70p a pint while the increasingly popular strong beer Hoxton Heavy from Hackney's only brewery, the 'Pitfield' is only 79p. Personally I prefer their lighter Pitfield Bitter and McMullens AK Mild to the stronger beers such as Hoxton Heavy, McMullens Country Bitter or Sam Smiths OBB. A selection of four of these brews are usually available. If you are not a real ale drinker there's always the usual assortment of spirits and keg beers such as Watney's Special, Fosters and Carlsberg Lager or Draught Guinness at 82p a pint - complete with Shamrock drawn into

the head.

If like me your quick one takes you to closing time and still in need of refreshment, Campbells have a selection of bottled beers including the Sam Smith's range and Grolsch (a lager-beer from Holland) as well as a take-away service on their draught beers and ciders. The well-known Sam Smiths will cost you £11 for 2 gallons or £2.75 for 4 pints. Having been weaned on Mild Ale and Cider I would recommend McMullens AK Mild (a light mild that could almost pass as an ordinary bitter) or Westons Perry, a superb refreshing pear cider at £4.50 per gallon (but remember that Vodka Ad, the effect can be shattering, so don't overdo it!)

A board in the pub indicates that food is available, eg, cottage pie, pizza, but I never dragged myself away from the beer long enough to investigate this. Campbells is hoping to enter a summer darts league, playing on Thursday nights - any players want to sign up for their team?

HPP would welcome suggestions for future Pub of the Month features, please write to us with details or requests.

Hackney Community Action

Hackney Community Action is holding its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 18 May at the Old Fire Station, 61 Leswin Road, N16.

HCA has representatives on many important organisations and council committees. In addition to these posts, elections will also be held at the AGM for places on the HCA management committee.

Community groups affiliated to HCA will already have received nomination papers. Further copies and more information can be obtained from HCA at Shoreditch Town Hall, 380 Old St, EC1V, Tel: 729 5536. Please send all nominations in as soon as possible.

NEW DIRECTORY

Leanda Blor is a new worker at HCA who has been employed to produce an up to date directory of groups and other organisations in Hackney. If you are involved in a group that runs activities or services in the area and have not been contacted, get in touch with Leanda so that your activities can be included and circulated to other groups and individuals.

Plaster disaster?

The Community Health Council reports the following quote of the month: Barts kitchen was being discussed when one person referred to plaster falling into the mixing bowl. He was corrected by the District Works Officer, who said he thought it more likely to be paint flaking off the ceiling. Remember this next time you happen to be at Barts and rest assured that you will not be eating plaster pie.

Table tennis marathon

Ken Auguste of the Stoke Newington Community Centre did it! By playing table tennis non-stop for 133 hours he broke the former record of 132 hours and 31 minutes, thus winning a place in the Guinness Book of Records. As well as breaking the old record Ken raised money for local handicapped children and SNCA. Congratulations Ken!

WHAT'S

BON • TON • ROULET

PEGASUS

109 Green Lanes N16. 226-5930.

★ ★ MAY BANDSTAND ★ ★

MONDAYS	REACTORS	£1.00
TUESDAY 3rd	THE LEGENDARY BLUES MASTER! ★ LOUISIANA RED ★	£3.00
WEDNESDAY 4th	SOUTHERN COMFORT 'featuring ... JOAN DAVIES - Soul Lady from Washington D.C.'	£1.00
WEDNESDAY 11th	NEAPOLITANS 'Afro / Caribbean, funk, fun and Reggae'	£1.30
WEDNESDAY 18th/25th	SOUTHERN COMFORT	£1.00
THURSDAY 5th	NEAPOLITANS	£1.30
THURSDAY 12th	ELECTRIC BLUEBIRDS 'Cajun, Tex Mex & R n B from the American South'	£1.50
THURSDAY 19th	HANK WANGFORD	£2.50
THURSDAY 26th	CAROL GRIMES	£1.50
FRIDAY	"FRIDAY NITE IS LET YA HAIR DOWN NIGHT..."	
6th/13th/20th	JUICE ON THE LOOSE 'Jump, Jive and Boogie - Recommended'	£1.50
FRIDAY 27th	★ CHEVALIER BROTHERS ★	£1.50
SATURDAYS	BIG CHIEF 'featuring JOHN FRY, ART THEMEN, DAVE CHAMBERS & OLD AGE!'	£1.50
SUNDAY 1st/15th/29th (ALTERNATE WEEKS)	IVORY COASTERS	£1.30
SUNDAY 8th/22nd (ALTERNATE WEEKS)	★ REPUBLIC ★	£1.50

Reduced Admission most nights for claimants & students - only on production of U.B. 40 or student union identity cards.

Cinema



MAY

ADVERTISEMENT

107 Kingsland High St, E8

Tel: 254 6677

HOW TO GET THERE

By rail: The cinema is 3 mins walk north of Dalston Junction (BR North London Line)
By bus: Nos 67 76 149 226 243 stop outside.
Nos 35 36 38 48 277 stop at Dalston Jctn.
By tube: Highbury & Islington, or Liverpool St., then by bus.

THU 28	BERTOLT BRECHT'S KUHLE WAMPE PG	9.00	MATINEES
FRI 29			SUNDAY 1
SAT 30	"A marvellous film" OBSERVER "A triumph of committed cinema" THE TIMES		I AM A FUGITIVE FROM A CHAIN-GANG 2.30 WHITE HEAT 4.15
SUN 1			
MON 2			
TUE 3			
WED 4	& LOVE ON THE DOLE U	7.00	
THU 5	WIM WENDERS THE STATE OF THINGS 18	8.40	FRIDAY 6
FRI 6			OF MICE AND MEN 2.00
SAT 7			ALL TICKETS & PRICE!!
SUN 8			SUNDAY 8
MON 9	Jean-Pierre Melville's THE ARMY IN THE SHADOWS PG	6.15	Carlos Saura's BLOOD WEDDING 2.30
TUE 10			Luis Bunuel's PHANTOM OF LIBERTY 4.00
WED 11			FRIDAY 13
THU 12	Q-THE WINGED SERPENT & KING KONG 18	9.00 7.00	GREAT EXPECTATIONS 2.00
FRI 13			ALL TICKETS & PRICE!!
SAT 14			SUNDAY 15
SUN 15	Francois Truffaut's THE LAST METRO PG	8.20	BENEFIT FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
MON 16			FILMS: AN INDIAN STORY and PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE
TUE 17			PLUS SPEAKERS 3.00
WED 18	& Eric Rohmer's DIE MARQUISE VON O 15	6.00	FRIDAY 20
THU 19			FAHRENHEIT 451 2.00
FRI 20			ALL TICKETS & PRICE
SAT 21			SUNDAY 22
SUN 22			WENDERS DOUBLE BILL
MON 23			GOAL KEEPERS FEAR OF THE PENALTY 2.30
TUE 24			THE AMERICAN FRIEND 4.15
WED 25			FRIDAY 27
THU 26			WEST SIDE STORY 2.00
FRI 27			ALL TICKETS & PRICE !!
SAT 28			SUNDAY 29
SUN 29			TWO SILENT CLASSICS
MON 30			ORPHANS OF THE STORM 2.00
TUE 31			BROKEN BLOSSOMS 4.20
WED 1			

TICKETS: £2.00 (Under 15s, OAPs, UB40s £1.00)

ON Music

CHATS PALACE

HOMERTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

42 BROOKSBY'S WALK E.9. 986 6714

MAY CALENDAR

Important: As Chats Palace has a club licence all users of the building must be members or their guests.

Sun	1	Chats Palace goes to the GLC Mayday Festival at Victoria Park. Building closed.
Tues	3	7.30pm Under 17's disco. 25p.
Wed	4	Louisboogienight in the bar with Louis O'Neil . Free.
Thurs	5	Chats Palace presents Ben Elton and The Joeys . £2/£1 unwaged.
Fri	6	Spare Tyre Theatre Company present
Sat	7	"Just Desserts". £2/£1 unwaged.
Sun	8	Noon Lunchtime jazz with the Rae James Quintet . Free.
Tues	10	7.30pm Under 17's disco. 25p.
Wed	11	Louisboogienight in the bar with Louis Freeform Fingers O'Neil . Free.
Thurs	12	Platform 6 Theatre Group Present "Worlds Apart". £2/£1 unwaged
Fri	13	Youth Reggae Night with Maka-D and Radication , Fourth Dimension , Papa L and All Girls Steel Band . 75p.
Sat	14	"Black and White in Colour" by Arts Opportunity Theatre, a fifty-strong youth company from Bristol. Presented in association with Hackney Leisure Services. £2/£1 unwaged.
Sun	15	Noon Lunchtime jazz with Ruthie Smith . Free.
Tues	17	7.30pm Under 17's disco. 25p.
Wed	18	8pm Louisboogienight in the bar with Louis O'Neil . Free.
Thurs	19	"Eastword Ho!" A festival of poetry, song and mime presented by Ignition and friends . £1.50/80p unwaged.
Fri	20	Benefit for Colin Roach Family Support Committee. Live music and poetry. (details to be announced). £2/£1 unwaged.
Sat	21	Doctor D's Rhythm Miracle Dada Disco . £1.50/75p unwaged.
Sun	22	Noon Lunchtime jazz with the Jazz Sviners . Free.
Tues	24	Basement Youth Theatre present The Contract . 7.30pm 50p.
Wed	25	Louisboogienight in the bar with Louis Freeform Fingers O'Neil . Free.
Thurs	26	Chats Palace Senior Citizens Club filmshow. "Singing in the Rain" with Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor. Free.
Thurs	26	Hackney Bands Showcase . Live music from up and coming bands. (details to be announced). £1.50/75p unwaged.
Fri	27	Little Women Theatre Company present "The Four Marys Against the Nuclear Threat" plus music. (details to be announced) £2/£1 unwaged.
Sat	28	Hackney Youth C.N.D. Launching Party . Stalls, films, disco, comedy. £1.50/75p unwaged.
Sun	29	Lunchtime jazz with the John Bennett Big Band . 50p/children free.

Other events

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE ON EL SALVADOR: At County Hall on 14 May. Cost £2. Details from El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park St, N1. Tel 359 2270. The campaign exists to support the people of El Salvador in their struggle to achieve social justice and freedom. For this they need the support of the British people.

THE PEOPLE'S MARCH FOR JOBS: Why are they marching? What can we do in Hackney? How can unemployment be halted? Views, information and discussion with Philippa Langton one of the march organisers. Plus a speaker from the local TU movement. Tuesday May 3 at 8pm, Homerton Library, Homerton High St, E9. It has been organised by Leabridge Communists who can be contacted c/o 126 Amhurst Rd, E8.

FOSTERS CORNER - Free Legal Advice at 124 Clarence Rd, E5 on Mondays 5 to 7pm and Wednesdays 5 to 7pm.

LAUNCH OF CHC MATERNITY GUIDE: The Community Health Council's new publication on maternity services in Hackney will be officially launched by Floella Benjamin and Gordon Bourne on Friday 6 May at the Assembly Rooms, Hackney Town Hall at 7.30pm, all welcome.

HACKNEY ASSOCIATION FOR THE DISABLED: annual general meeting at Hackney Town Hall on Tuesday May 3 at 7.30pm.

WOMEN'S ART WORKSHOP DAY Every thursday from 10.30 to 5pm. This new workshop will be working initially on visual material and issues around women's health. Work will include silk screen printing, design, layout and Black & White photography. Creche available. Women only, £2/50p unwaged. Tel Kate on 986 6714 for more details, you can join anytime.

THE CHESTNUTS FOLK CLUB has returned to the Chestnuts! After a time in Snaresbrook, they have just returned to their original Pub on the outer fringe of Hackney in Lea Bridge Road, E17, not far from the Whips Cross roundabout. Buses 48,55&38 will take you there, or within walking distance.

The club is upstairs and the beer, on the strength of the first week, an excellent pint of Taylor Walker Bitter or Ind Coope Burton Ale. Their programme for the next few weeks is as follows:

May 1 May Day Ceildh with Blowzabella.
May 8 Tim Wood plus support.
May 15 Tom McConville.
May 22 June Tabor and Martin Simpson.
May 29 Richard Digance.
June 5 Proper Little Madams.
June 12 Pete Cooper.

Floor singers are welcome, although demand is such that a spot can not always be guaranteed. The Chestnuts is a lively club well worth a visit; telephone Alan Bearman on 803 1757 for more details.

Theatre

HOXTON HALL 128a Hoxton St N1. Tel 739 5431

May 6 at 8pm: Lancel, African Arts. An exciting performance of music and Dance.

May 13 at 8pm: Stuart Deeks, an evening of Viennese classical music.

May 20 at 8pm: The Women's Theatre Group in Love and Dissent written by Elisabeth Bond.

May 27: Dick Playle and friends present Hey Presto Follies a variety evening.

WORKSHOPS AT HOXTON HALL: Working Together a weekend workshop on 16 and 17 May. Art music and dance leading to an informal performance at the end of Sunday. Ring for more details.

Victorian Workshop art, drama, music and dance. Saturday 28, Tel for more details.

Tickets at Hoxton Hall cost £1.50, concessions exist eg UB40 40p.

ALTERNATIVE CABARET at The Factory, Mathias Rd, N16, on Mayday, Sunday 1 May. From 8pm. Organised by Stoke Newington Communists, Cost £2/£1 unwaged with an assortment of entertainers, food, drink, disco.

Sunday 8 May at 8pm **CAST** presents **NEW VARIETY** at Brabant Road Community Centre, 2a Brabant Rd, off Station Rd, Wood Green, N22. Features Ian Kelly, Lotte Literati, Controlled Attack with the highlights from "Accidental death of a Dinosaur." Also the political punk premier of Poison Girls. £1.50 plus 50p membership, £1 unwaged.

May 7: **DEMONSTRATION**; Britain out of Ireland, Self determination for the Irish People. Initiated by the Troops Out Movement with the support of many other organisations. Speakers to include Ken Livingstone. Assemble at Speakers Corner Hyde Park at 1pm.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

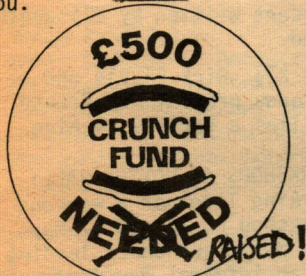
Perhaps this issue of HPP is the first one you've ever seen. Perhaps you've bought the odd copy in the past, but never regularly. Perhaps you are a devoted monthly reader (there are some!).

Whatever you are, did you know that you can help write or produce the next issue? All you have to do is come to our open editorial meeting, which will be held in Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8 at 8pm on **TUESDAY 17th MAY**.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish the paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor and no shareholders, and no one is paid by the paper.

HPP is sold through various newsagents and shops throughout Hackney. If your newsagent doesn't sell it - and you think she or he would like to - then please contact us. We can arrange delivery on sale or return regularly at the beginning of each month.

If you enjoy reading HPP and think that more people should read it please get in touch with us if you are willing to sell a few copies to friends or neighbours or at meetings. Even if you don't have the time to get more fully involved, we would still be pleased to hear from you.



The good news from HPP's Crunch Fund is that we've now reached our target of £500. All our debts have now been paid off, and we've planning to spend some money on headlining equipment which will make our lives a lot easier during the layout process.

But a paper like HPP will always be in severe financial difficulty if we don't get regular support from our readers and supporters. So if you'd like to make a donation then please use the form below.

- Take out a subscription to HPP and guarantee regular delivery! Just send a cheque/PO for £3.30 for one year's subscription to Hackney People's Press, c/o Trojan, 10a Bradbury Street, N.16. Please make cheques payable to HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS.

I enclose a donation of _____ to HPP
Subscription only

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

NURSERY IN TURMOIL

Continued from front page.

majority of parents and staff because they were lesbians and trade unionists. They either denied that the alleged incidents happened or said that the low morale amongst the staff meant that everyone acted in the same way. In instances where children were being supposedly unnecessarily disciplined, Janet Pearce said that it was her way of child care.

Below: The Market Nursery.



Parent's and Friend's Views

The Panel's decision has the overwhelming support of the parents. Apparently, if it had not returned these ver-

dicts, most of the children currently at the Nursery would have been withdrawn. It is accepted by the parents that this dispute has exposed the lack of a clearly worked out policy on sexism and racism. This is something that the recently formed "Friends of Market Nursery" are now working on. They also welcome the call for a Council-led enquiry into the Nursery raised by Janet Pearce and Liz Thomas. Ironically, this would bring into question how committed Hackney Council is to handing over control of voluntary aided institutions to democratically elected bodies.

Provision of Training

But there is an opinion, even among Management Committee supporters, that the Council can help in the provision of in-service training for those sitting on management committees. If this had been available, the management hiccups of the Market Nursery dispute could have been avoided. In turn, there is also a feeling that staff who work at community nurseries should also receive some sort of professional in-service training in child-care.

NEW YOPS FOR OLD

Continued from front page.

Hackney NALGO have voted to oppose the scheme; the number of unfilled vacancies has risen in Council Departments (up to 33% in Housing for example) yet the Council has continued to boost its intake of YOP trainees to cover these gaps.

"We have seen abuses in training schemes and we don't want to see more," said NALGO's Pauline Alden. It is easy to see why the unions view the YTS proposal with suspicion.

But what about unemployed school leavers? Lucy deGroot of the Trade Union Support Unit said: "a whole generation of young people are being removed from the labour market (and unemployment figures) and shuffled into schemes where they are held in a wierd limbo between school and work."

The meeting nonetheless agreed a set of common principles for negotiations with the Council. They included: using the MSC money to fund the first year of full and permanent contracts leading to proper jobs with the Council; a £50 per week allowance; positive action to ensure equal access for women and ethnic minorities; no job substitution; proper ILEA education to be included as part of the training scheme and the right of trainees to full trade union membership and activity.

These proposals and counter-proposals look good on paper, but they are all a weak response to what is essentially a warmed-over rehash of the dreadful Youth Opportunities Programme. As one trade unionist said: "We're only reacting to Tory policy, tinkering with it and trying to improve it. We're using the language of administrators."

The prevailing wisdom in the Youth Training racket is that it's not worth opposing the scheme since the MSC will lumber on regardless. It is a sad commentary that Hackney's radical, socialist answer to the YTS has been to try and make the best of a bad situation. If you have experience or observations of training schemes in Hackney, why not write HPP and tell us what you think of the Council's plans.

HACKNEY EDUCATION & ADVICE SERVICE - Free information and advice on courses, skill learning, improving your reading and writing, taking up a sport or hobby. At the Advice Centre 236 Mare St, E8. Open 10 - 2pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Also Tuesday evening 5 - 7pm. Or Tel Alison Mc Garry or Anne Short on 986 8446.

MAKING JOBS: A Conference to launch THE PRODUCT & EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT NETWORK.

Saturday 14 May 10.30am to 4.30pm. At the Polytechnic of North London, Prince of Wales Road, NW5. Cost £3/50p unwaged.

The conference aims to explain the objectives of the Network and the resources which will be available in the Islington Centre.

Bookings to: Deputy Director, Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, N7 8DB.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

NEW ADDRESS

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PETTY BUREAU

HERE COMES THE ***-TOTTING SHERIFF OF MANCHESTER



WITH HIS ***-TOTTING POSSE OF TRUSTY ***-TOTTING MEN.



OUT TO DO BATTLE WITH THE GUN-TOTTING CROOKS OF THIS WILD NORTH FRONTIER CITY...

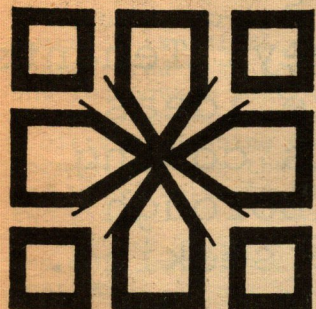


* THE POLICE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO EXERCISE MILD JUDICIAL EDITING ON ANYTHING THEY CONSIDER DENIGRATING TO THE CHARACTERS AND WORK OF OUR BOYS IN BLUE.

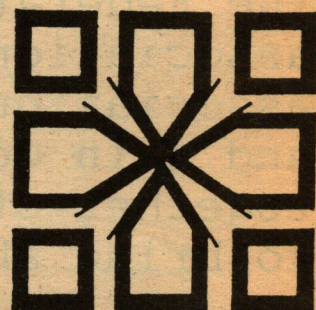
HACKNEY**HACKNEY PEOPLES PRESS**

Hackney's OTHER Newspaper

**10 TH
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION**



Federation of Hackney Tenants' Associations



Tenants have had their own organisation in Hackney, in some form or other, for over 100 years. Certainly tenants organised as part of the Labour Movement against bad private landlords prior to the formation of the Labour Party.

Herbert Morrison was the first Labour Mayor of Hackney. He believed that the role of a Labour Authority should be to do the same job as the other political parties but that a Labour Authority should do it better. One could claim that the first part of this sentiment has been with us ever since, but that respective Council's have failed to manage Hackney's affairs properly.

LABOUR IN CONTROL

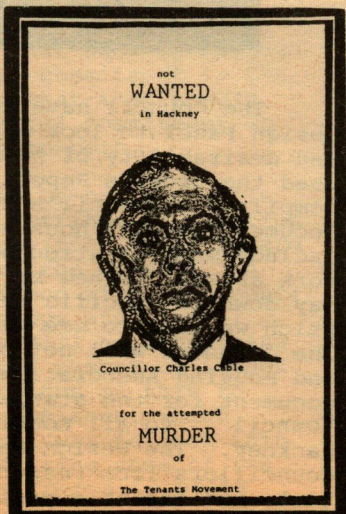
Labour has been in control of Hackney ever since the first election after the formation of the Labour Party in 1900 - except that is for one period of office when the Tories won the election in 1968. Labour lost the election because it had failed local people miserably. Tenants had lost confidence in Labour because of their experience of the Council as a landlord. On entering Office the Tories immediately set about attacking basic rights and services of tenants - rents were increased and services were cut.

The deposed Labour Councillors, who up until that point had refused to accept

the Tenants' Organisation which existed, realised that they needed to regain the support of the tenants and got involved with the Tenants' Organisation. They gained control over it and established what was in effect a Federation of Council Tenants' Associations. Councillor Charles Cable became Chair of that organisation and remained so until he was re-elected as a Councillor in a Labour Council. At that time the vast majority of Labour Councillors were tenants and had been involved in the Tenants' Organisation. As will happen, when they were re-elected as Councillors they saw no need for an independent Tenants' Organisation.

THE FAILURE OF LOCAL POLITICS

One of the main failures of local politics has, and to a lesser degree still is, been the failure to develop effective democracy. The Tenants Movement as with the Labour Party, had been used merely as a vehicle for a few politically ambitious individuals to get into what they saw as powerful positions. What they failed to acknow-



ledge was that they did not really have power unless they were supported from where they claimed to be coming from. They had used undemocratic means with the Tenants Movement to gain control. Not surprisingly, they could not recognise that same forum because when they were involved in it it was undemocratic. They were also determined that the Movement would not be organised against them in

the same way they had used it against the Tories.

GROUPS UNITE

At that time there were several organisations covering different sectors. The Hackney United Tenants' Organisation was mainly concerned with HBC tenants and was constantly resisted by the Council. (It is interesting that this is the same name used by those same deposed Councillors who oppose the present

Federation). The Council claimed that they could only recognise one Tenants' Organisation, so after lengthy discussion and debate the Groups came together and formed one organisation - THE FEDERATION OF HACKNEY TENANTS ASSOCIATIONS. Meanwhile the Council was organising tenants on estates and establishing a Tenants Forum which suited and could be controlled by the Council.

(see 'Officer Control' pg. 3)

Comprehensive Housing Recipes

Lou S.H. Snotty

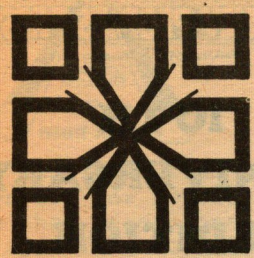


In this special issue of Hackney Peoples Press, the Gourmet of Reading Lane has produced one of his most economical recipes for Hackney Tenants. All the ingredients can be found readily available on Council estates in Hackney and the recipe provides an aromatic blend of all things embarrassing to the Housing Department.

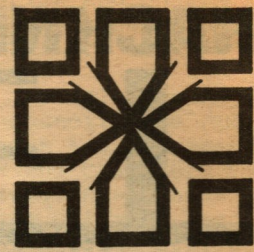
MAISONETTE CASSEROLE EGYPTIENNE

1lb Rump Steak of Environmental Health Officer
8 oz Pharaoh Ants
2 oz Fungus
1 Copy of the Public Health Act 1936
½ pt Condensation
1 Tbsp Asbestos

First capture your Environmental Health Officer (this should be quite easy as this particular sort of nuisance quite often hangs around Council Estates and tries to tell Lou S.H. Snotty that Council property is in bad condition). Fry the EHO steak and pharaoh ants (you may have to go on a special shopping spree to Holly Street to find these) in a frying pan until the steak is golden brown and the ants have stopped wriggling. Slice the copy of the Public Health Act 1936 and simmer with the meat. When the ink has run sufficiently to make this despicable piece of legislation unreadable, add the condensation (preferably from a bedroom). Take the mixture to a Hackney Council Labour Group Meeting (you will find the hot air at these meetings sufficient to cook anything and I find that rents rise particularly well here). When tender, garnish with asbestos (any colour will do) and serve (preferably to other tenants).



Federation of Hackney Tenants' Associations



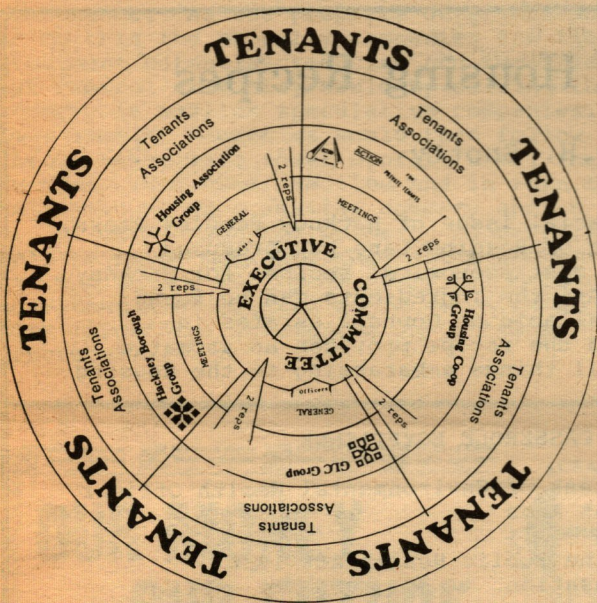
The Federation is a collective organisation of tenants' associations from all types of housing stock in Hackney. Tenants associations affiliate to the Federation to contribute ideas and gain collective support from other tenants. This coming together strengthens the voice of tenants within the Borough to bring about the changes which we, the tenants, are seeking.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The Federation used to meet on a monthly basis with all the tenants' associations affiliated attending, to discuss issues of common concern. This presented enormous problems for the organisation as it was not able to address issues related to specific sectors. For example the Housing Association discussions could not easily take place at meetings dominated by Council tenants. This was also true for the GLC and Co-op tenants.

After lengthy debate and discussion it was decided that the organisation be structured on a Group basis. Tenants with specific interests could then come together to discuss problems and issues of common concern. There were reservations among the membership as it was thought by some to be a divisive mechanism which would prevent mutual support. However, the separate groups were established and the tenants' associations affiliated to the organisation divided into common interest groups. Hackney Borough Council tenants formed the Borough Group, Housing Association tenants formed the Borough Group, Housing Association tenants formed the Housing Association Group, GLC tenants the GLC Group and so on.

Each of these Groups has established their own autonomy, meetings are held around issues pertinent to each Group. Each Group operates independently, holds its own Annual General Meeting, and has its own Officers. The Groups also establish their own Working Groups where necessary or appropriate.



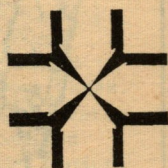
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Each Group of the Federation elects 2 representatives on to the Executive of the Federation. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer, along with 3 other representatives are elected at the A.G.M. of the organisation.

The elected Members from the A.G.M. and each of the Groups make up the Executive Committee which meets monthly to discuss and determine the operation of the whole organisation and to draw the different aspects of the organisation together.

The Federation has 6 representatives on the Housing Committee of the Council as well as representation on other Council sub-committees. The Housing Committee representatives are as follows:
2 from the Borough Group, 2 from the GLC Group, 1 from the Housing Association Group and 1 from the Co-op Group.

Housing Association Group

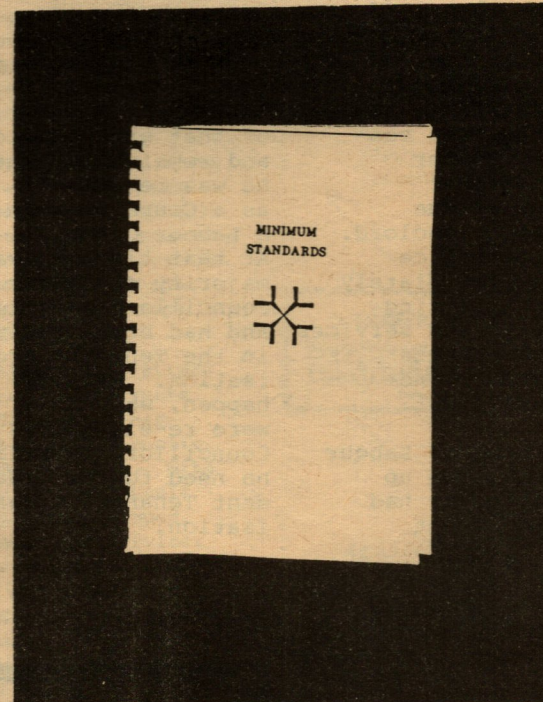


The Housing Association Group of the Federation has worked on a number of issues. The main issue that they have dealt with has been the analysing and establishing of a means by which Housing Association/Trusts are accountable to their tenants and the local community in which they operate.

As much of the Housing Association activity in Hackney concerns the rehabilitation and modernisation of older housing stock, problems have arisen for tenants because of the quality of the conversion work carried out. The Housing Association Group of the Federation has produced a detailed document on Minimum Standards for Housing Associations to adhere to in their rehabilitation and modernisation programmes. The Group have asked the Council to endorse the 'Minimum Standards' Document as a Policy Document of the Council and to use whatever methods it can to ensure that these standards are being maintained by Housing Associations.

The report has been submitted to Hackney Council along with the following proposals on local accountability of Housing Associations:

1. That all Housing Associations operating within the Borough Boundary be managed by local management committees made up of tenants, councillors and members of the community.
2. That the Council adopt a policy of encouraging Housing Associations to make funds available to the tenants' organisation to encourage and stimulate tenant groups within their housing stock.



The Council have now set up a Housing Design Panel to look into the design quality and desirability of housing stock. They have used the Group's Report as the basis of compiling a Council's Minimum Standards Document for all housing stock. This will include modernisation and rehabilitation work as well as new build property. It will lay down in specific terms the type of housing which we want to see developed in Hackney. The document will not only serve the Council and Housing Associations but will become the document for the standards insisted on by the Council to all housing agencies within Hackney. The Design Panel is made up of Councillors from respective committees, architects and tenant representatives.

GLC Group



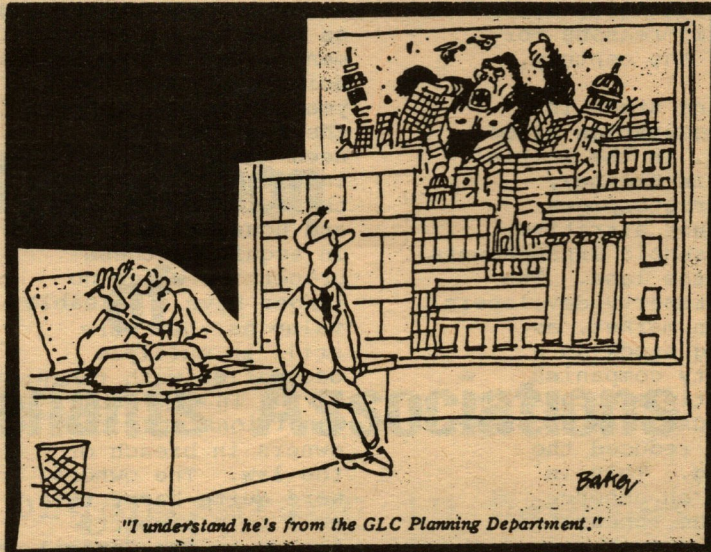
In April 1982 Hackney Council's housing stock increased from around 25,000 properties to 44,000 properties with the transfer of 17,000 flats and houses from the GLC.

In the year leading up to the transfer while the Council was busy involving itself in legal wrangles the Federation and Unions were working on the practicalities of what was going to happen to them as tenants and workers.

The GLC Group of the Federation was well aware of the difficulties Borough Tenants encountered with Hackney's unaccountable and inadequate services. The main theme of the tenants proposals was the setting up of a District Housing Committee which would be responsible for the management of ex-GLC stock and would initiate the gradual merger of the two stocks. The District Committee would be made up of tenants, union reps, and Hackney and GLC Councillors. An accountable forum that would supervise the financial aspects of the stock in terms of cash flow, rent revenue etc. could have ensured a much more efficient use of resources; GLC tenants pay higher rents than Borough tenants and the GLC paid Hackney Council £8.5million in 82/83 for "setting up and management costs". The GLC also retained responsibility for major capital works and has an obligation under the terms of the transfer order to bring its stock up to a minimum "acceptable standard" within 10 years. There has been no monitoring of this money and in fact it took almost a year to force Hackney Council to admit that they had received it. Even then, unlike other London Boroughs receiving transferred stock, they did not put this money into the Housing Revenue Account and the Housing Finance Officer even described the money as a subsidy to the rates!

At the same time GLC staff transferring to Hackney's employment were attempting to negotiate terms for their new conditions and compensation to staff for disturbance. The Council and the Hackney Gazette presented this dispute as being the "greedy unions" demanding £800 for all transferred workers. In fact GLC workers had more generous leave, better overtime/bonus payments at weekends and as early as October 1981 had sought to open transfer negotiations with Hackney Council.

Hackney Council rejected both tenant and union proposals and the end result was several weeks of chaos; Hackney's new Housing Districts were not fully operational in time, District 3's Office, for example, was a building site with no telephone at the time of transfer. NALGO staff were in dispute, manual workers refused to accept the new set-up for almost a year and for GLC tenants services have been at an all time low for over a year.



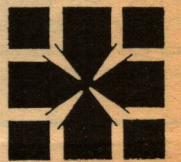
GLC tenants have put forward proposals for equalising rents (and the GLC has said they will compensate Hackney for any lost revenue), they have demanded compensation/rebates for lost services (Cllr. Charles Clarke, Chair of Housing, agreed to this but went back on his word), and will continue to campaign for better services and management, and will fight to gain the improvements to estates that the GLC is obliged to provide. Hackney cannot continue the anomalies of a two tier rent structure and two different levels of services to its tenants. The fight goes on.....

OFFICER CONTROL

In 1973 the Hackney Council established a Housing Community Office with the responsibility of organising tenants through the Housing Department. Naturally the emphasis was put on community and social activities. It extended the Council's patronising attitude as a landlord into the very base of the tenant community.

It was based upon the belief that tenants were not capable of organising themselves and needed professional help to 'assist' them to live 'properly' on Council estates. The Council determined how the tenants should organise even to the extent of writing their constitutions, running their Annual General Meetings and controlling all the community facilities which were provided such as community halls. Existing tenants' associations were ignored while the Council Officers set up 'community associations'. Their belief that tenants were incapable is no more clearly demonstrated by the fact that a number of those community association's committee members were not even tenants.

Hackney Borough Group



The aims of the Hackney Borough Group of the Federation have over the years been constantly thwarted by the Housing Community Office. The Community Office is a section within the Housing Department, which operated in a thoroughly disreputable and prejudiced manner, by attempting to control and manipulate tenants' and community associations throughout the Borough and tried, sometimes successfully, to force them, through underhand means, to operate without challenging the actions and management of the Housing Department.

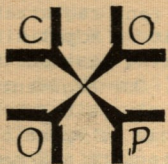
Despite this, three years ago the Borough Group entered into discussions with the Trade Unions to try and identify why maintenance and repair services provided by the Housing Department were so bad. This resulted in the publication of a report analysing the problems of the Maintenance Department and the Direct Labour Organisation, and identified conclusively that the main problem in the maintenance and repair service was one of management in both the Housing and DLO structures. The report recommended ways of overcoming these problems. It was clear that the structures for the services to tenants had not been evolved from any form of rational overall planning. This in turn led to a high level of bureaucracy. This resulted in the workforce not being organised in an efficient way, and was demoralising for the workforce and tenants alike.

The report proposed the establishment of Area Based Maintenance Teams which would work in specific local areas. This would enable the workforce and the tenants to get to know each other, the workforce to get to know the housing stock and would cut down bureaucratic inefficiency and travelling time. Operatives would be able to stock materials needed for repairs locally and thus save time and transport costs.

The design of job tickets was too complex and needed to be changed to enable tenants to report their problems directly to Area Teams. Job tickets would be given directly to these teams by the tenants and the communication between tenants and the workforce would be direct, this would cut out one of the major causes of complaints - the long delays while the tickets passed from one housing office to another.

When the report was completed it was attacked viciously by management and they resisted its implementation. Firstly they tried to prevent it by trying to establish token crews. However, the newly elected Council declared that they would work from the Report and established a Working Group, made up of Councillors, Unions and tenant representatives from the Federation. That Group has been meeting on a regular basis and is in the process of implementing the Report. Initially there will be 22 Area Bases staffed appropriately to provide maintenance to the areas covered. The operation will be continually reviewed by the tenants and the workforce to ensure the teams are efficient and become accountable to tenants.

Housing Co-op Group

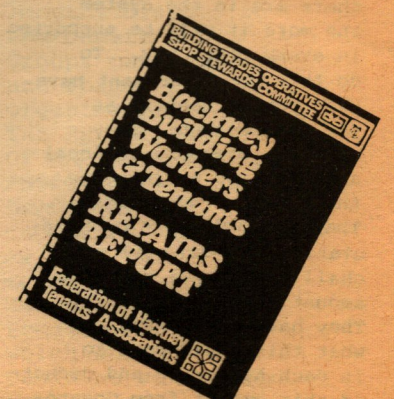


Housing Co-ops have had a particularly difficult time in Hackney because the Council has not been responsive to any housing sector outside its own function. Whereas Housing Associations and Private Landlords have a power in their own right to gain development and resources, the Co-ops are made up of ordinary local people who wish to acquire and manage their own housing stock.

The process for doing this is much the same as that for a Housing Association except that the management Committee are the tenants themselves. Hackney Council has not had any real understanding of Housing Co-ops and has made no real commitment to their development.

The Co-op Group produced a paper on the development of Housing Co-ops and their history. They produced this along with specific proposals on the way forward. They involved Hackney Council in discussions about Co-ops. The proposals were basically that Hackney Borough Council should make a real commitment to the development of Co-ops and that they should do this by making a financial commitment to them. The Council agreed to both.

Through the debate on Co-ops the whole issue of allocations and lettings in relation to Co-ops has come up, specifically in regard to their relationship with the Council. A dialogue has been established with the Council and a debate among the Co-ops and Council Members. The Co-op Group will be organising a day seminar to iron out a number of issues and to present the conclusions of this to the Council. The other commitment which was made by Hackney Council was to look into the possibility of transferring some of its empty property to housing co-ops to bring them into use.





PRIVATE RENTED

While public housing in Hackney is not exactly "homes fit for heroes" the Federation is well aware that often those tenants living in the most appalling conditions are tenants of the numerous unscrupulous private landlords in the Borough. There are historic reasons for this going back to the turn of the century.

Most of the private housing stock in Hackney has been in multiple occupation since it was built. It was realised, in the initial stages of housing development in Hackney, that the terms offered to owner-occupiers i.e. the middle-classes, were not attractive. This was mainly due to the leasehold arrangements negotiated with the owners of the land. The housing stock being built by property developers was not attractive, on the open market, as family dwellings. This housing stock as a result was purchased by property companies that let the properties in multiple occupation i.e. several families in one house. As a consequence the property developers reduced the quality control of the building. This is why in Hackney one will notice an absence of architectural grandeur in the appearance of the housing stock. The investment value was in the renting of the properties and property companies maximised their profits by doing the absolute minimum of maintenance and repairs. This meant that there was a high overuse of the property and a lack of maintenance. As the property deteriorated due to this the property companies saw their investment potential reducing and regained what capital cost they could by selling the property to smaller speculative companies. These smaller companies would then follow suit by maximising their profits until they saw their investment decline and in turn they would sell it to a smaller company and so on. At each stage the property company involved would be squeezing what they could out of what had become very poor housing stock. Today that same housing stock is in need of major investment to improve the property structurally.

The current landlord don't have the capital or the inclination to put resources back into the properties as there is no investment potential in doing so. Over the years this has opened the doors for the need of public housing involvement and caused the activity of Council and Housing Associations in acquiring these properties which no longer have a saleable value as they were still in multiple occupation with tenants living in appalling conditions and the owners in breach of the law. The owners were quite happy to sell this property either to the Council or a Housing Association. However, there is the lower end of the spectrum, i.e. those who are attracted to the idea of establishing a business based on property to let. This situation gets worse as housing demands grow and housing provision diminishes. Hackney has a large number of small speculative landlords that take advantage of the housing needs in the community. The Local Authority has a responsibility

to all people living in Hackney irrespective of the owners of their accommodation. However, Hackney Council have been more the reluctant to pursue those private landlords who are in breach of legislation and exploiting those in housing need. This attitude is changing in the Council and it is now their intention to make Hackney a "no-go" area for bad landlords. Some initiatives are now taking place to develop a strategy for the private rented sector and the time has come for long overdue action.

The Federation is calling meetings of private tenants in Finsbury Park, probably the worse area for private rented sector housing and where, for example, over 30% of the households have to share bathrooms. The main concern when action is taken must be that the tenants do not become the victims of the action. The problem for private tenants are compounded by isolation and intimidation. We must hope that private tenants can build,

organise and ensure that their needs and demands are met.

In relation to the council, the Federation has had meetings with the Chair of Housing, Environmental Health Officers and other Housing Officers. It is hoped a programme of action against bad landlords will be formulated rapidly. A central support unit will co-ordinate the activities of different Council Departments and other agencies which up to now have worked in isolation from each other. It is hoped to set up a safety net of emergency, temporary and permanent accommodation through the Council, Housing Associations and Co-ops for tenants displaced from homes in multi-occupation (HMOs) by improvements or evictions. Other actions will include acquisition of some properties (by Compulsory Purchase Order if necessary) by the Council, Housing Associations or by Tenant Co-ops, and in some cases grants will be made to landlords to improve their properties. The Federation believes that these grants should be linked to conditions that following improvements the houses will become available to tenants at affordable rents and with security.

**OUR MONEY
OUR FUTURE
WHOSE COUNCIL?**

**WE DEMAND
'ONE SERVICE · ONE RENT'
FOR COUNCIL TENANTS.
(75% of the population of Hackney)**

Federation of Hackney Tenants' Associations
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IS HACKNEY COUNCIL
STEALING OUR RENTS
TO PAY FOR
GOVERNMENT CUTS???

BOROUGH OF HACKNEY THE LONDON

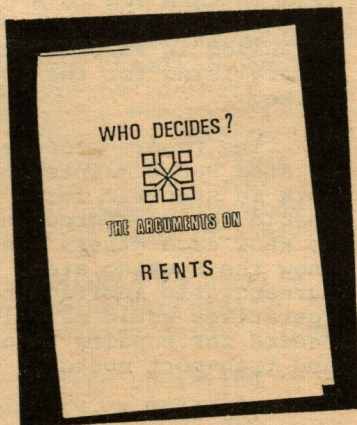
RENTS

It is Central Government Policy to create a climate whereby owner-occupation becomes increasingly attractive. Housing is a major tool of social and political control, and owner occupation is an important way of engaging people in the financial system. The more people there are in the system the more it will be supported in every other way. To do this the Government have used public housing as the main weapon. They have put pressure on local authorities to increase their rent dramatically. They have done this by stipulating that Council rents shall go up by a specific amount (40% in 1982). They have then calculated what this would come to in each Authority and deducted that amount from Government Subsidy. This subsidy

is not to tenants but to the Council. Council tenants are not subsidised by the Government or by anybody else. What is subsidised is 'housing' (including both non-council and owner occupiers) and this can take the form of expenditure on such things as home improvement grants and money for Housing Action Areas as well as the public sector.

Hackney Council have increased their expenditure on non-Council housing over several years and have used increases in Council rents to finance it. While tenants' rents have been increased real services to them have been decreased. Many of the Council's functions to non-Council tenants are now paid for out of the Housing Revenue Account (the landlords account financed almost entirely by Council rents). Most of the services the Council provides to the rest of the community from rates are paid for out of rents on Council estates. This includes such things as

lighting, cleaning, refuse collecting and gardening. Tenants also pay rates, and as their rate-based services such as lighting etc. are being charged in their rents they are in effect paying twice. All those services and many more services are paid for from the Housing Revenue Account, which is topped up at the end of the year from the rates. This payment from the rates has always been defined as a subsidy to the tenants from the rates. If tenants weren't paying twice and the whole cost of these services was met by rates the Housing Revenue Account would show a substantial profit. The present situation exists because of Officer control in the Council. This year the Federation produced a number of reports and lobbied Councillors in an effort to get the truth across.



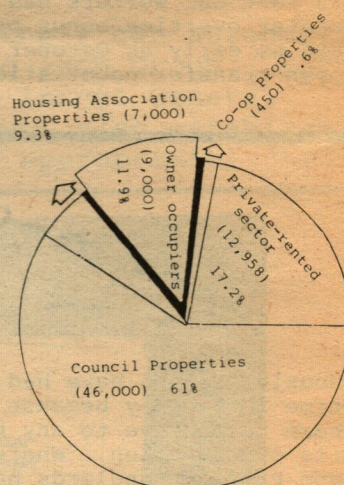
Increases in Council rents have a knock on effect to all other tenants. The Rent Officer is following suit by screwing tenants of the Housing Associations and the Co-ops. Some Housing Association rents have been registered with

100% increases. The Housing Association Group of the Federation is at present analysing (with legal advice) the rent registration system and rent levels. We intend to develop a campaign against the rent registration system as it is a political process working against the tenants.

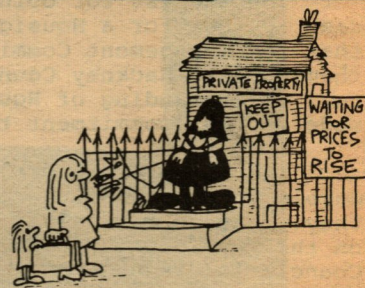
Our argument is, and has always been, that rents should be spent on services to tenants and not as a means of holding down rates. The council has been doing exactly what the Tories want - passing on Central Government cuts to tenants. The Council have protected local businesses at the expense of working (and non-working) people.

Alongside this attack on tenants through rents Central Government has almost obliterated public housing development. With virtually no new Council housing being developed, the standard and services of the existing stock has declined and there have been massive increases in the rents. Tenants are being squeezed into seeking the only other option - owner occupation.

This increases the demand on house purchase which pushes up the price of housing, resulting in bigger mortgages which results in larger interest payments and more profits for the finance institutions. This is happening in Hackney - with full backing of the Council - (albeit inadvertently). In addition, Hackney Council is spending more and more of its resources in grants to owner-occupiers to do up their homes and increase their value.



**CONGRATULATIONS
HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS**
Hackney's OTHER Newspaper



**IF YOU ARE A TENANT
JOIN A
TENANTS ASSOCIATION**

For further information contact

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**....Fighting for
a better Hackney....**